THE MEDICI

COLONEL G.F. YOUNG, C.B.

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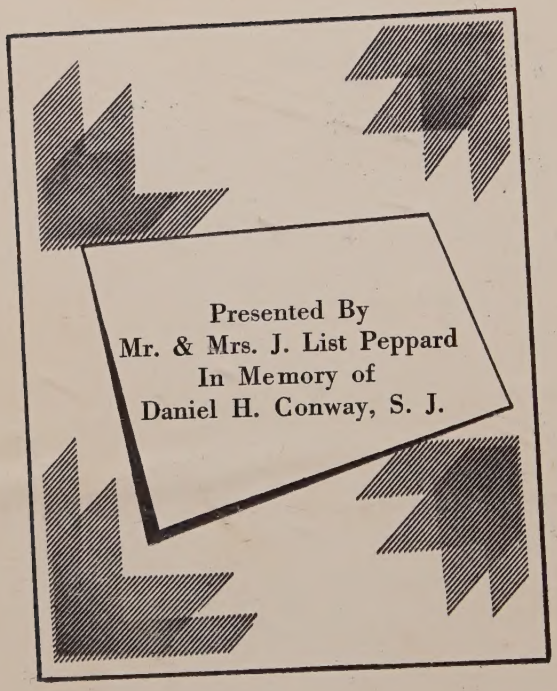

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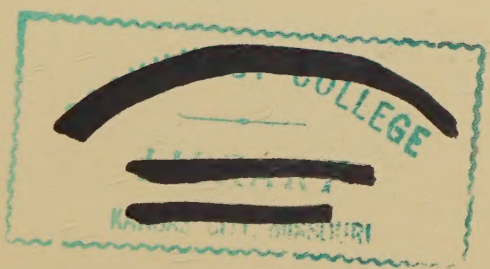

THE MEDICI

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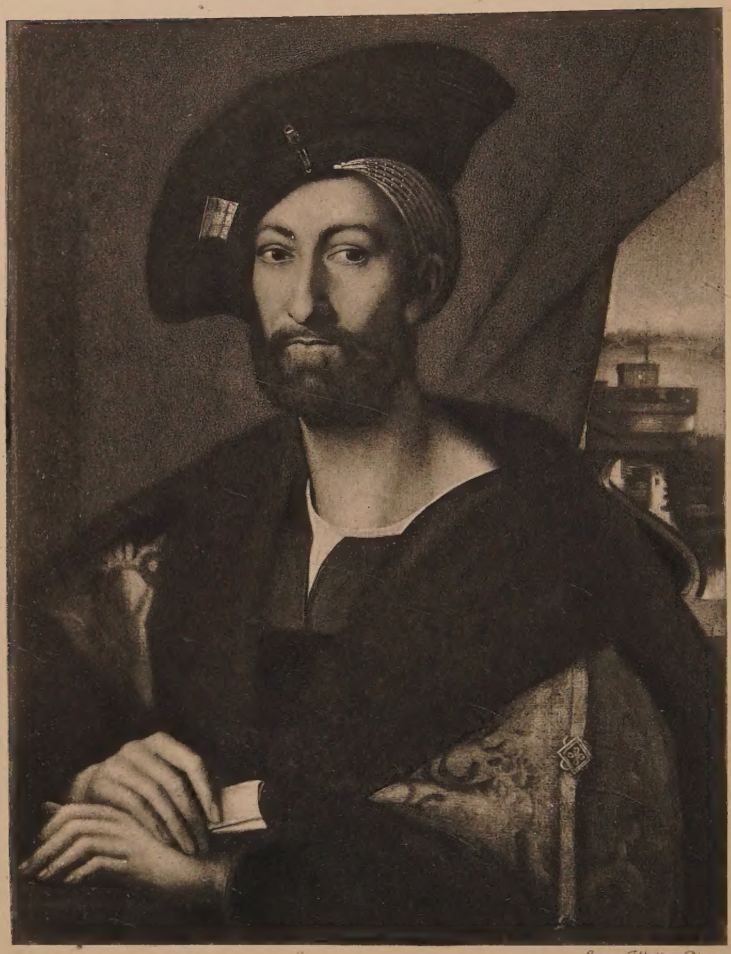

Emery Walker Ph. Sc.

Giuliano (Duc de Nemours)
from the picture by Raphael
in the possession of Herr Oscar Huldschinsky

THE MEDICI

BY COLONEL G. F. YOUNG, C.B.

"*Facta ducis vivent, operosaque gloria rerum;*
Haec manet; haec avidos effugit una rogos."—OVID.

"*Nescire autem quid antea quam natus sis acciderit,*
id est semper esse puerum."—CICERO.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I.

NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY
1923

[*Translation.*]

"The leader's deeds and hard won glory live ;
This remains ; this alone survives the funeral fires."—OVID.

"Not to know the events which happened before one
was born, that is to remain always a boy."—CICERO.

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To
MISS MARY JOSEPHINE ALLEN
OF BOSTON, U.S.A.
TO WHOSE
ENTHUSIASM FOR THE REMARKABLE FAMILY
WHOSE HISTORY IS HERE TOLD
THIS BOOK OWES ITS
ORIGIN.

"The little present must not be allowed wholly to elbow the great past out of view."—ANDREW LANG.

PREFACE

THERE are in English several histories of three or four of the more important members of the Medici family; but there is none, either in Italian or English, of that family as a whole, the history of no less than nine out of thirteen generations having remained hitherto unwritten.

The history of the Medici is a deeply interesting story; while, besides its intrinsic interest, it helps us to acquire much knowledge about the re-birth of Learning and Art, about the history of Europe in perhaps its most important period, about the birth of Science, and about the great collections of Art possessed by Florence. For without referring largely to all these subjects no true picture of the Medici can be given.

My aim has been to write of them *as a family* — their rise, their "course upon the mountain-tops of power," and their decline and end — and to keep the parts always in subordination to the whole. It may perhaps be thought that more might have been said in the case of one or two members of the family; but to have gone into greater detail regarding individuals would have had the effect of obscuring the general view, besides making the book far too long.

This history takes a somewhat different view of the Medici from that which has hitherto generally obtained. It is a strange fact that in their case the violent partisanship which swayed the historians of their time has been carried on into our own, and writers about them, whether belonging to their age or ours, are banded into two furiously opposing camps;[1] making it very difficult to arrive at a true estimate. Those on the one side can see no faults, and give a picture which one feels to be untrue to life by reason of its successive eulogy;[2] while to those on the other the name of Medici appears to act like an intoxicant, rendering them incapable of seeing what the very facts recorded by themselves demonstrate, and making even facts telling strongly in favour of those concerned appear to such writers only to show a subtle policy towards a nefarious end. And it is those of the latter type who have been best known,[3] and have consequently been followed by writers who, in guide-books on the art and history of Florence, have had occasion to allude to the Medici. There have been Florentines of note (now passed away), well read in the archives of their country, who have said that if only the world at large could study those archives it would discover that the time-honoured view of

[1] Amongst writers on the subject Mr Hyett and Mr Armstrong are almost the solitary exceptions to this blinding partisanship.

[2] *E.g.* Roscoe.

[3] The well-balanced and careful writer Mr Hyett, in speaking of those "who seem unable to write the name of *Medici* without having first dipped their pens in gall," includes in this class Cavalcanti, Sismondi, Perrens, Napier, Trollope, and to a considerable extent also Symonds.—(*Florence*, by F. A. Hyett, 1903, p. 289.)

the Medici which has thus grown up was to a very large extent unjust, and far from the truth; but their voices have not been generally heard.

To "whitewash" historical characters is as great an offence to history as to traduce them, and the view to which I have gradually been led regarding the Medici has not been due to any original bias in their favour. On the contrary, I began this study entirely imbued with the time-honoured theory I have mentioned, and was only brought by degrees to a different opinion by coming to see that the admitted facts refused over and over again to square with the view of this family usually presented to us. I have therefore preferred to judge those concerned by their acknowledged deeds, rather than by comments thereon which (emanating from writers violently biassed against them) are found uniformly attributing good actions to ignoble motives, or distorting those actions until they become full of impossibilities.[1]

Avoiding any attempt to make out the Medici as either this or that, I have endeavoured, eschewing all "legends," to detail simply the facts for which we have evidence. No crimes attributed to them have been omitted or slurred over. If the result is to show the Medici in a better light than hitherto has been the case, that is not due to any

[1] Such facts, for instance, as that when Cosimo returned to power in 1434 none of those who had attempted to take his life and ruin his family were put to death, or that Piero put down an armed rebellion without the loss of a single life and turned his enemies into friends, or that Lorenzo saved the life of the Cardinal Riario who had just attempted to murder him, are seen in their true significance when looked at apart from all such comments.

desire to "whitewash" them, but is simply the consequence of a want of any evidence for a large proportion of those crimes which have furnished the darker shades in the traditional picture of this family. I have also endeavoured to leave the facts to speak for themselves as far as possible, to narrate rather than to explain, leaving readers to form their own conclusions; as I am confident that in this way what the Medici were and did is likely to be more forcibly appreciated.

As regards the elder branch of the family, this book relates for the first time the histories of Giovanni di Bicci, Piero il Gottoso, and Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino); brings to notice certain points not previously known with reference to Cosimo Pater Patriae, the manner in which that title was given him, and his singular tomb; and throws some new light on the character and deeds of Lorenzo the Magnificent. It takes a different view from that hitherto held regarding Pope Leo X., Catherine de' Medici, and Pietro the Unfortunate. And it discloses for the first time the inner history of Pope Clement VII., the scheme which he formed, the manner in which he carried it out, and the motives underlying his (hitherto imperfectly understood) political manœuvres with Charles V., Francis I., and Henry VIII.

As regards the younger branch of the family, this history is the first that has been written. In this portion of the subject the most notable points are: The various important achievements of

Cosimo I. and Ferdinand I.; the character and importance of Eleonora di Toledo; the history of Anna Maria Ludovica, a member of the family who has been practically unknown, though most deserving of record; the solution of a problem long unsolved connected with the feeling regarding the Medici in their own city; the unveiling (through the results of recent research) of many misconceptions regarding Cosimo I. and his sons; the exposure of such errors as the common one of supposing that the palace known as the Pitti Palace was built by that family instead of by the Medici; the demonstration of the unique connection of the Medici with the birth of modern Science; and the disclosure of the immense gift made by the last of the Medici to Florence. In the absence of any history of this portion of the family, it has not been recognised that the deeds of the younger branch in the domain of Literature, Art, and Science were, though different in character, of scarcely less importance than those of the elder branch. The elder branch advanced Learning and Art by the liberal expenditure of their wealth in that cause, their enlightened patronage, and their artistic taste; their art collections, however, being swept away. The younger branch did for Science what the elder branch had done for Learning; while it was they who collected all those artistic treasures[1] which now form the attraction of Florence. Thus this portion of the history necessarily furnishes a

[1] Excepting those which are frescoes.

large amount of information which was hitherto entirely wanting regarding the artistic possessions of Florence.

Lastly, as regards Art, this book explains for the first time the meaning of certain pictures, hitherto misunderstood, but whose true meaning a complete study of the Medici history reveals. The chief of these are:—Gozzoli's frescoes in the Riccardi Palace (the Medici Palace), to which frescoes an entire chapter has been devoted; and the true meaning of Botticelli's pictures, "*The Adoration of the Magi*," "*Fortitude*," "*The Birth of Venus*," the "*Primavera*," and "*Calumny*." It also brings to notice a hitherto unknown statue by Gian da Bologna, called "*The Genius of the Medici*"; a hitherto unknown portrait of the celebrated Clarice Strozzi, of whom it had been supposed that no portrait existed; and a hitherto unknown portrait of the Princess Violante Beatrice, of whom also it had been supposed that no portrait existed; and gives the first reproduction of a lost portrait of Maddalena, eldest daughter of Lorenzo the Magnificent, of the recently discovered portrait by Raphael of Giuliano, third son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, which had been lost for three hundred and fifty years, and of nine other portraits of members of the Medici family which have not previously been known. And it demonstrates that the recent theories put forward regarding several of Botticelli's most important pictures are erroneous.[1]

[1] Appendix VI., Appendix VII., and Appendix IX.

In the chapters relating to the earlier members of the family short notices have been introduced of the prominent artists of the time, not merely in order to show to how large an extent the Medici were concerned in their steady advancement to greater achievements, but still more because this is essential if the Medici are to be shown in their proper "setting." The favourite method of separating the history of the time from the history of its art would in this case have been exceptionally destructive; for it would have excluded from the biographical sketch of each head of the family that which in the case of many of them was their chief interest in life; and even to place such notices at the end of the chapter would have caused a similar separation. The course adopted preserves better that close touch with the world of Art which is here essential, while it also assists to maintain the due sequence of events in regard to Art. These notices cease after the time of the "Interregnum" (1494-1512); to have continued them beyond that point, when the Tuscan school, which had so long led the way, began to merge into the larger field of Italy, would have had the effect of obscuring the history of the Medici with matters in which they had ceased to be any longer an important factor.

In the earlier chapters short abstracts have been given from time to time of contemporary events taking place in other countries, as this course, though unusual, is I think in the case of a history of this kind helpful, by keeping it in

touch with general history as it proceeds. The need for such abstracts gradually decreases as the history of the family advances.

In regard to the vexed question of references to authorities I have endeavoured to steer a middle course between quoting chapter and verse for every statement (a method as much loathed by the general reader as it is liked by scholars) and quoting no authorities at all. Either method is, of course, open to criticism from one side or the other, but I think the middle course adopted is that likely to be preferred by most readers.

In the notices on contemporary artists I have freely used extracts from other writers in detailing the special characteristics of the art of various painters and sculptors; as on such a subject it has seemed to me preferable to quote the words of others whose opinion must necessarily have far greater weight than my own.

I desire specially to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr F. A. Hyett's *Florence* in regard to the characters of Cosimo Pater Patriae and Lorenzo the Magnificent, to Mr E. Armstrong's chapter in vol. iii. of *The Cambridge Modern History* in regard to the administration of Tuscany under Cosimo I., to his *Lorenzo de' Medici* in regard to the character and writings of the latter, and to Count Pasolini's *Life of Catherine Sforza* in regard to that remarkable ancestress of the later generations of the Medici. Also to Miss Hope Rea's *Donatello*, Mrs Ady's *Fra Angelico*, Mr Langton Douglas's *Fra Angelico*, and Dr

Williamson's *Perugino*, in regard to the art of those masters.

Original research has been carried out chiefly (though of course not entirely), with regard to that portion of the history relating to the last six generations of the family. And here a very large part of the information has, even more than from books and manuscripts, been gathered from what buildings and tombs, pictures, statues, and monuments have to tell, these having proved as valuable a mine of information as the records of the archives. Added to this, I am also indebted to the researches of the late Professor G. E. Saltini for much valuable information in regard to this portion of the history of the family.

This book is written primarily for the general reader, but not exclusively so, and I trust that scholars may find in it not a little that is new to them, both in the domain of History and of Art. At the same time, it does not pretend to be more than a very inadequate memorial of this interesting family; and none know its imperfections so well as myself.

G. F. Y.

Florence, 12*th October* 1910.

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[1] *See* footnote to p. 32.

THE MEDICI

PROLOGUE

In the fifth century storm upon storm out of the dark North swept away in a great deluge of barbarism all the civilisation of the western half of the Roman Empire. From the Atlantic to Constantinople, and from the Rhine and Danube to the deserts of Africa, all that was learned and cultivated, all that was artistic and beautiful, was overwhelmed in an avalanche of ruin in which not only the triumphs of architecture, literature, and art, produced by many centuries of a high civilisation, but also those who could create such things afresh, were involved in one general destruction.

Then after a night of thick darkness, obscuring everything in Western Europe for two hundred years, during which these barbarian races are battling over the dead corpse of the Roman Empire, comes in the eighth century Charlemagne, creating a brief light for forty years. But on his death the darkness settles down again, wrapping all in gloom; and again we read, "Barbarism and confusion reigned throughout Western Europe for a hundred and fifty years." Meanwhile, from

Arabia another deluge, that of the Mahomedans, sweeps in succession over the fair countries forming the eastern half of the Empire, creating there also a similar desolation. Gradually all that is left of the art and letters of the Roman Empire takes refuge in Constantinople, where it remains shut up, surrounded west, north, east, and south by the barbarian flood.

At length in the twelfth century the re-civilisation of the West is begun by the discovery in Italy of the code of the Roman law. Then come in the thirteenth century Niccolò Pisano, and in the fourteenth century, Dante, Giotto, and Petrarch, to arouse men again to a sense of the beautiful and the cultivated; and Art and Literature begin to flow back to their long-deserted Western home. And so, out of the very grave of that old civilisation of Rome, buried deep nine centuries before, comes the new inspiration, the Re-birth.

But as yet there was none with power to make these efforts produce their full fruit; none with power to unearth the treasures so long buried, to spread a knowledge of them throughout the West, and to make the voices of those long dead begin again to speak. While after these four fathers of the Renaissance[1] had passed away Art and

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	Died
[1] Niccolò Pisano. The father of modern Art . .	1278
Dante. The immortal poet who recreated intellectual life in Western Europe. . .	1321
Giotto. The father of modern Painting. *"He by whom dead painting was restored to life."* .	1337
Petrarch. The father of modern Learning, who first taught men to study the classical writings of Rome.	1374

Literature threatened again to die, and the movement thus inaugurated to become but local and temporary.

And then, in the city which had produced three of these men, arose a family who, with the power of wealth, and with a great love for these things, lifted Learning from its grave, spread a knowledge of it through Europe, gave Art the encouragement it needed in order to advance to its highest achievements, and made that city the Athens of the West.

CHAPTER I

FLORENCE

"O Foster-nurse of man's abandoned glory,
Since Athens, its great Mother, sank in splendour,
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story,
As Ocean its wrecked fanes, severe yet tender;
The light-invested angel Poesy
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee."

—SHELLEY.

STANDING on the hill of San Miniato, and looking down from thence, as so many belonging to bygone generations have done, at the city spread out at our feet,[1] we see before us a city such as none other ever can be to a large portion of mankind, one in which things have had their birth which now form the life-blood of all the intellectual existence of Europe. As Yriarte says: "We must dearly love Florence, for she is the mother of all those who live by thought."

Her outward beauty is palpable to all. The domes and spires of a smokeless city bathed in sunshine, the slopes of the Apennines, extending almost to its walls, covered with vineyards, olive plantations, gardens, and numberless luxurious villas, the silver thread of the river Arno winding away in the distance through the beautiful Val

[1] Plate I.

d'Arno, the "tender" colouring which in Tuscany is so marked a feature of the distant landscape, all these together make up a whole which is a dream of beauty.

But there is more to be seen than this, and Florence's charms are not confined to her outward beauty. For this is the city which produced the Renaissance,[1] an achievement which will ever surround Florence with an unfading glory. The influence she has thus exercised has secured for her a world-wide interest. Undoubtedly the main attraction of Florence for the modern world is as a place where there breathes a stiller, higher atmosphere than that of the hurrying, striving twentieth century; a place where, if we will, the history of the past is made to rise before us, and where the masterpieces of Art strive to draw the mind upwards from the low level of the trivial, the ignoble, and the commonplace. It has been said, "The arts are the avenues by which the mind of man soars to its highest limits." If that be so, then in Florence if anywhere in the world must the truth of those words be felt. For in this city of Dante and Petrarch, of Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, Donatello. and Michelangelo, of Giotto, Orcagna, Masaccio, Fra Angelico, Botticelli, and Leonardo da Vinci. not only one of those avenues, but no less than four of them, have been followed as far as the mind of man has ever penetrated along them.

We are going for a little while to be occupied amidst scenes instinct with the spirit of these men.

[1] The word "Renaissance" must not be allowed to be ousted in favour of a new fashion. The term "Renascence," which a certain school of writers are anxious to introduce with an idea that it is English, appears both pedantic and incorrect; there is no such word as "nascence" in the English language.

Therefore, in looking at beautiful Florence let us try to think chiefly, not of her outward beauty, but rather of all the deep interests which she is able to unfold to us—in art, in history, in literature—bound up with the name of Florence for all time. To consider the high-souled *thoughts* which gave their birth to all that we go there to see: produced by minds which were able to make their city pre-eminent among all cities in painting, in sculpture, in architecture, and in poetry, and at the same time pre-eminent also in learning, and in the science of their age.

Thus, as we look down upon Florence from San Miniato[1] we shall be drawn to think of the high aspirations of those who first planned to build that mighty dome,[2] and who directed their cathedral to be designed "*so as to be worthy of a heart expanded to much greatness*"; to think of the conceptions of him who, while he was the father of all painting, could also be so great in architecture as to design that beautiful bell tower by its side;[3] of the strong character of those freedom-loving Florentines who erected that solidly-built city fortress[4] to guard their supreme council from the effects of their own turbulent spirit; of all that lies collected under that small pointed spire in the background,[5] telling of the dawn of the Renaissance of Art; or, again, of what a world of high-souled thought is represented in

[1] *See* Plate I.
[2] The "Duomo," the cathedral of Florence.
[3] Giotto's campanile.
[4] The Palazzo della Signoria (Palazzo Vecchio).
[5] Sta. Maria Novella (with Giotto's and Orcagna's frescoes, and the Spanish chapel).

the line of statues in that colonnade[1]—Florence's "Valhalla" — extending from the river to the fortress; that galaxy of the great, in poetry, in art, in learning, and in science, all produced by this single city, and containing, even though Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Masaccio, Fra Angelico, and Botticelli are not there, at least twelve great names of which any *one* would suffice to make any other city famous. And as they look down upon us from their niches, they invite us to walk their streets in spirit with them—with Dante, and Giotto, and Orcagna, and Donatello, and Leonardo, and Michelangelo, and Galileo—and to be uplifted into the world where their thoughts dwelt, so that we too may be, if but for a moment, "among the immortals."

Lastly, we shall be drawn to think of that family who for so many generations took a chief part in all that interests us in Florence; whose care for Learning and Art produced such wide effects; who preserved to the world most of those treasures of art which we now visit Florence to see; and who all lie buried in that church of San Lorenzo[2] which is marked by the smaller dome in the distance, where as their line came near its end they erected tombs which are those of crowned heads, tombs visited by all the world for their masterpieces of art and their magnificence.

The city is what those who once lived in it have made it. And as we look at the memorials of themselves which they have left behind them (and

[1] The Uffizi colonnade.

[2] San Lorenzo (with the New Sacristy, and the Medici Mausoleum). The dome is that of the mausoleum.

VIEW OF FLORENCE, FROM SAN MINIATO.

Brogi]

which still belong to their descendants) we must not omit all thought of the race which made these men what they were. For this is Etruria, a country which has always, from the earliest times, led the way in Italy, and from whence in the Middle Ages there came forth (as leaders of the movement which we call the Renaissance) a great succession of men of whom it has been said, "The dazzling light of their genius shines on through the centuries to show to future generations what man can be and do."[1] So that these memorials of Florence's past are no dead records of a bygone time, but afford the strongest inspiration to us of the present day.

And since the Signoria of Florence, when starting at the end of the thirteenth century to build their cathedral, declared, in the document conveying their instructions to its architect, Arnolfo di Cambio, that the desire which animated them was that it "should be designed so as to be worthy of a heart expanded to much greatness, corresponding to the noble city's soul, which is composed of the souls of all its citizens," the great dome of Florence (whose construction was thus inspired by an aim so different from that which later on called into being its rival at Rome) may well, whenever from far or near it strikes upon the eye, act as a clarion-call to high and noble aims. The men who, in a mere government document ordering a great public work, could reach such a level were no common men. And in commenting on their words, Mr Walter Scaife justly asks:—"Has the much-vaunted progress of civilisation during the six centuries that have since passed carried us so

[1] *Florentine Life during the Renaissance,* by Walter Scaife.

far beyond either the sentiments or the work of these men?"

But there is yet another attraction which Florence possesses for the modern world. And that is the vividness with which the past is there made to live before us; the way in which the twentieth century is enabled to look at the fifteenth even with the outward eye, and as if four swiftly-flowing centuries that have intervened were rolled back. The massive strength of the Bargello, of the Palazzo Vecchio, and even of ordinary buildings in every direction, forces upon us the recollection of the fierce fighting which these narrow streets have time after time witnessed. And while other cities have preserved little round which interest connected with men eminent in History, Literature, or Art who passed their lives there can gather, Florence, which has held a leadership in Art and letters equalled by no other city except Athens, teems with memorials of those who gave her that leadership. The dome of the cathedral brings to our minds Brunelleschi, its nave re-echoes with the thundering eloquence of Savonarola, its beautiful campanile recalls to us Giotto; the Loggia de' Lanzi reminds us of Orcagna, the Baptistery bears record of Ghiberti, the Torre del Gallo still keeps alive the memory of "the starry Galileo." We see the house where Dante lived; we pass the shops where Giotto, Botticelli, and Andrea del Sarto worked; we follow the same streets by which Verrocchio, Ghirlandajo and Michelangelo went to their daily tasks; we stand before church doorways made beautiful by the art of Luca della Robbia; we listen to Donatello's voice as we gaze at the statues surrounding Or

San Michele; we pace the corridors and cloisters of San Marco accompanied by the spirits of Fra Angelico and Savonarola. And in many an old fresco the faces, dress, and manner of life of the men and women of the Renaissance are brought before us with startling vividness.

But the full effect of this vivid realisation of the past which Florence forces upon us is best seen by comparing her with her great rival Venice. Mrs Oliphant, speaking of Venice, says[1]:—

"After the bewitchment of the first vision a chill falls upon the enquirer. Where is the poet, where the prophet, where the princes, the scholars, the men whom could we see we should recognise wherever we met them, with whom the whole world is acquainted? *They are not here.* In the sunshine of the Piazza, in the glorious gloom of San Marco, in the great council chambers of the Ducal palace, once so full of busy statesmen and great interests, there is scarcely a figure, recognisable of all, to be met with in the spirit—no one for traces of whom we look as we walk, or whose individual footsteps are traceable. Instead of the men who made her what she was, and who ruled her with so high a hand, we find everywhere the great image of Venice herself. . . . In her records the city is everything, the individual nothing. Venice is the outcome, not great names of individual Venetians."

Mrs Oliphant's subsequent remarks show that the root of the reason why Venice produced no prominent men was the inordinate love of money. A race with whom money-making and money-spending is the one serious interest cannot penetrate those "avenues by which the mind soars to its highest limits." Florence also loved money, but

[1] *The Makers of Venice*, by Mrs Oliphant.

it was not her chief interest. And so we have this significant result: Florence, with Art and Learning as her passion, and with her long line of immortal names in every branch of these, the city which led the way in producing the civilisation of Europe; and, on the other hand, Venice, producing next to nothing of the kind,—no great poet, no great scholar, no great sculptor, no great statesman known to all the world, no great painter, even, until her rival had been leading the way in that particular for a hundred and fifty years, and had produced a host of such, — and leaving nothing behind her but her own exalted name, nothing still able to elevate mankind after her own glory had passed away.

It is a great contrast. And just as it is the lack of the human interest in the case of Venice that causes that "chill" to fall upon the enquirer, so on the other hand it is the abundant possession of the human interest that gives Florence her great attraction. The seed from which the fruit grew was, in the one case, the love of money, in the other, the love of Art.

The arms of Florence, the iris, or *giglio*; as drawn by Giotto.

CHAPTER II

THE MEDICI

We turn from this glimpse of the city to those who were for over three hundred years its most prominent citizens.

The history of the Medici covers three and a half centuries (1400-1743), two of those centuries, the fifteenth and sixteenth, being the most interesting period of any both in History and in Art. It is a period which covers the change from mediæval to modern history (which may be held to commence with the long triangular duel between Francis I., Charles V., and Henry VIII.); it covers the time when the conditions changed from those consequent on the feudal system and small, isolated states, to those brought about by regular armies and powerful countries with clashing interests; it covers the time when the chief political power in Europe shifted from the great independent states of Italy (Venice, Milan, Florence, and Naples) to the northern countries, France, England, and Germany; it embraces the Reformation, with all that brought it about and that followed from it; and it includes the extinction of the (Christian) Eastern Empire and establishment of the (Mahomedan) Turkish Empire in its place, the discovery of a new world

in America, the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, and in general the settlement of the different nations of Europe, after centuries of transition, in the localities they now occupy. As regards Art the period is even more important; for with the year 1400 there began that wonderful fifteenth century which saw the birth of the Renaissance in Art, and produced a galaxy of great men in every branch of Art, such as the world had never seen before, and is never likely to see again.

The gradual rise of the Medici from comparative obscurity, and not by military conquests, to so high an eminence is one of the most remarkable things in history. From simple bankers and merchants they rose, in spite of much opposition and many vicissitudes, until they became the most powerful family in Europe, and indeed until there was a Medici on the throne of nearly every principal country.[1]

They are interesting from several very different points of view :—

The important place which they took in history makes their story at times almost that of Europe. Cosimo Pater Patriae, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Pope Leo X., Pope Clement VII., and Catherine de' Medici, not to mention others, have made the name of Medici occupy a larger place in history than was probably ever taken by any other family.

Their patronage of Learning and Art. In this domain the Medici have never been approached by any others among the rulers of mankind. The Rothschilds of their time, their immense wealth

[1] *See* vol. ii. p 382.

was lavishly expended on the revival of Learning and the encouragement of Art. In painting, Fra Angelico, Lippi, Gozzoli, Ghirlandajo, Botticelli, Lorenzo di Credi, Leonardo da Vinci, and Raphael; in sculpture, Ghiberti, Donatello, Verrocchio, and Michelangelo; in architecture, Brunelleschi, Michelozzo, and Bramante; with a host of lesser names, all owed much to their assistance. As regards Painting this had specially important results; and just as the age of Pericles in Athens became the "classic period," or period of highest development, of the art of Sculpture, so the age of the Medici has become the classic period of the art of Painting.

Their connection with the Reformation. In this great movement which convulsed all Europe throughout the greater part of the sixteenth century, the two Popes who belonged to this family[1] were those chiefly concerned—namely, Leo X., Luther's great antagonist, and Clement VII., the Pope in whose pontificate England repudiated the claim of the Church of Rome to exercise supremacy over the Church of England. Naturally this again adds much interest to the story of the Medici.

Lastly, owing to an exceptional many-sidedness they touched life at so many points. In statesmanship and financial capacity, in learning and artistic

[1] There were two other Popes who also had this name of Medici, but they did not belong to this family: viz., Pius IV. (Johannes Angelus Medici of Milan), who was Pope from 1559 to 1565, and Leo XI. (Alessandro Medici), who was Pope for a month in 1605. The former belonged to an obscure family in Milan and took this name; and the latter belonged to the Medici of Naples, and was therefore not a descendant of the historic Medici; though he was a distant connection, being descended from a brother of the grandfather of Giovanni di Bicci (*see* Appendix II.).

taste, in civil administration and sympathy with the feelings of the people, in knowledge of commerce and agriculture, in all these different directions did the Medici evince an unusual ability. And this was joined to qualities of courtesy, agreeableness of manner, absence of arrogance, and a free and generous disposition, which much enhanced their power of influencing those with whom they were brought in contact. They were not, however, assisted by any attractions of personal appearance, their portraits showing that they were by no means a handsome family, their only good feature being their fine eyes, which were proverbial. These various characteristics make them an interesting family apart from the other aspects of their history.

Two grave charges have been preferred against them: first, that they by a long course of duplicity deprived their country of its liberty, and exalted themselves into despots over it; and, second, that there is to be attributed to them an evil pre-eminence in crimes of murder. How far these charges are just will be best seen as we follow the course of their history; but regarding the second some general remarks are called for.

The charge is a strange one in view of the contemporary history of other countries. For the history of this family embraces thirteen generations, and out of this number there are no less than ten generations to whom no such crimes have been even *attributed.* It is not until we reach the seventh generation that we have the first murder committed by a Medici; and even that was committed by one who had no legitimate

right to the name.[1] While it is not until we reach the eighth and ninth generations that we meet with that series of these accusations which has been the main cause of the reputation which has been given to the family.[2] Such a charge against a whole family involves comparison; and when we compare even the whole of the cases attributed to the Medici with those authenticated as committed by other contemporary ruling families, not only in Italy, but also in France, England, and Spain, it becomes evident that the popular belief ascribing to the Medici an evil pre-eminence in such crimes can only be due to a lack either of information or of the sense of proportion. Among ruling families of the time there are few to whom there have not been attributed more crimes of this nature than to the Medici. Nor do we stigmatise the whole line of the sovereigns of England or France because three out of thirteen generations may have committed crimes of this character.

Some writers, while admitting the injustice of this graver charge, and while ready to allow that the Medici were capable, intellectual, and patriotic, assert that nevertheless they were grasping, cruel, intriguing, and stained with vices which were rampant in their times. It is hoped that this history will demonstrate convincingly that the Medici were decidedly not either grasping, or cruel. To say that they were intriguing is merely

[1] The murder of Ippolito de' Medici by his so-called cousin Alessandro "the Moor," who was either the illegitimate son of an illegitimate son, or else not of the Medici blood at all (*see* chap. xviii.).

[2] The eighth generation is that of Cosimo I., and the ninth that of his sons. Most of these charges are now known to have been false accusations due to political animosity, and are rejected by modern historians, in the fuller light now available, as untrue (*see* vol. ii. pp. 272, 279, 280-284, 334-336, and 370).

to say that they were men of their age. Regarding the fourth point, while they certainly were not free from the vices rampant in their times, the indictment in the manner it is made is an exaggeration, implying as it does that the Medici were worse than others, whereas all evidence tends to show that they were distinctly better in this respect than other contemporary families. This general statement, on a point to which modern histories do not consider it necessary to allude except in general terms, will perhaps suffice; but it will be found to be borne out by various facts in the lives of many members of the family as these are followed.

Symonds makes a complaint against the Medici that they were "*bourgeois.*" *Of course* they were *bourgeois*: it is the very pith of their story: and instead of giving ground for a gibe to be cast at them it contributes much to their honour. It is the essence of their history that they belonged entirely to the people, that their rise began from their championship of the latter against the nobles, and that theirs was an aristocracy, not of birth, but of talent and culture.

They present to us in following their story the most opposite extremes both of conduct and of fortune. Marvellous as to their rise, pathetic as to their vicissitudes, magnificent as to their liberality towards objects for the lasting benefit of mankind, tragic as to many episodes of their career, despicable as to their ignoble decline and end (except for one last act worthy to rank with those of their best days), their history is like a great drama extending over three hundred years, and played out on the widest of stages.

CHAPTER III

GIOVANNI DI BICCI

Born 1360. *Died* 1428.

In the year 1400 the Medici[1] were an ordinary middle-class family in Florence. The family can be traced back as far as the year 1201, when Chiarissimo, eldest son of Giambuono de' Medici, and a member of the Town Council, is noted as being the owner of various houses and towers in the Mercato Vecchio; but the only branch of it[2] with which we are concerned is that which made so great a name in history, and was destined to run an eventful course of nearly three hundred and fifty years.[3]

Of this branch Giovanni de' Medici was at this time the head. For some reason or other his father, Averardo de' Medici, was nicknamed by his companions "Bicci." Among the Medici the same Christian names recur so frequently that each is in history known by some addition or sobriquet, and Giovanni, the founder of the historic branch of the family, is always known as Giovanni di Bicci (*i.e.*, Giovanni, the son of Bicci). He was at this time a man of forty years of age,

[1] For Genealogical Table, *see* Appendix I.

[2] For Genealogical Table of the other branches, *see* Appendix II.

[3] From 1400 to 1743, in which latter year Anna Maria Ludovica, the "last of the Medici," died. On her death no one of Giovanni di Bicci's blood remained. Any of this name now existing in Italy are not descendants of the historic Medici, but are descended from one or other of the above-mentioned collateral branches.

and highly respected for his character and business ability.

The family were bankers[1] and already possessed of considerable wealth, which Giovanni by his financial ability increased. Several of his ancestors had taken part in public affairs. His great-grandfather Averardo, who had begun the prosperity of the family by successful trading operations, had been Gonfaloniere in 1314; his grandfather Salvestro had been one of the envoys of the Republic deputed to conclude the treaty with Venice in 1336; and two of his father's first cousins[2] had been Gonfaloniere in, respectively, 1349 and 1354.

But Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici[3] came of a family which had signalised themselves in another way than this. For they had on several occasions

[1] There is no foundation for the story that the Medici were originally doctors (*medici*). That story seems to have originated in two ways. First, with the mediæval love of a play upon words, Cosimo, Giovanni's eldest son, chose for the patron saints of himself and his family, St Cosmo and St Damian, the two doctor saints, and these were in his time generally introduced into pictures painted for him or in his honour. Secondly, when the wits of Paris, in the days of Catherine de' Medici (always so hated in France on account of her *bourgeois* origin), desired to hold her up to contempt, they concocted the story that the Medici were originally apothecaries (*medici*), and that the family arms, the celebrated *palle* (or balls), represented the pills which they made. The story is an entire fable; the Medici can be traced back for two hundred years before Giovanni di Bicci's time, and throughout this period were merchants and bankers, not doctors. They did not belong, for instance, to the doctors' guild, but to the guild of bankers. The precise signification of the Medici arms, the red balls on a field of gold, is unknown.

[2] *See* Genealogical Table (Appendix II.).

[3] The *dei*, written *de'*, customary in the case of the Medici and other families in Florence, had no significance similar to the French *de*, not denoting high birth or nobility, but seems simply to have originated from the correctness of the Tuscan mode of speech. It appears to have been employed without any rule that is discoverable; so that while we always find, *e.g.*, Vieri dei Cerchi, Lorenzo de' Medici, or Alessandra de' Mozzi, we also find Filippo Strozzi, Baccio Valori, and Francesco Guicciardini.

taken a prominent part in the struggles of the people against the nobles (*grandi*). A distant cousin of his father (also named Giovanni) had, in 1343, been seized and put to death by the tyrant of Florence, Walter de Brienne, Duke of Athens, as one of the most dangerous of the citizens (*popolani*). And when Giovanni di Bicci was eighteen years old, he had seen, in 1378, a distant cousin of his grandfather (another Salvestro), by his powerful words in the Signoria, bring about the riot known as that of the Ciompi (the weavers, dyers, and minor workmen of the guild of wool), which riot, we are told, "broke the power of the nobles, and destroyed the oligarchy of the 'Parte Guelfa'"; while another cousin of his father's, Vieri, had pacified the rebellion of 1393. Thus the family had as its tradition antagonism to the nobles and championship of the cause of the people. Giovanni di Bicci was destined to go far in the same course, as well as to found a family whose influence was to spread far beyond the sphere of the petty politics of Florence.

Let us first see what, in this year 1400, were the conditions surrounding him, (i) in his own city, and (ii) in the larger world beyond it.

(i) Florence, after fierce struggles between rival factions for a hundred and fifty years, had at last settled down with the most democratic government on record. In 1260 the banished Ghibellines, under Farinata degli Uberti, had at the battle of Monteaperto defeated the Guelphs and re-entered Florence in triumph. The Ghibellines had thereupon proposed to raze Florence to the

ground; against this Farinata degli Uberti had "raised his single voice,"[1] and prevailed; for which act he has obtained lasting honour in Florence, and his statue (the only Ghibelline one) has received a place among those of Florence's greatest men in the Uffizi colonnade. Then had succeeded in 1289 the battle of Campaldino, giving the final victory to the Guelphs; whereupon the community had been divided into guilds (*arti*), whose representatives formed the governing body, the Signoria. In 1298 had begun the building of the cathedral, and of the Palazzo della Signoria, the order for the latter to Arnolfo di Cambio, the architect, stating that it was required "for the greater security of the Signoria in this city so given to sudden and violent tumults."

But the internecine strifes did not cease even though the Ghibellines had been driven out; the same fierce conflicts as before broke out under new names—Cerchi *versus* Donati, White Guelphs *versus* Black Guelphs, and so on. At length, in 1343, Walter de Brienne, a foreigner whom the city had made its governor, was driven out, when a time of anarchy and frequent revolutions followed; during which occurred, in 1348, the great plague described by Boccaccio, and in 1378 the above-mentioned riot of the Ciompi. As a result the Signoria was reconstituted and composed of representatives ("Priors") from each of the twenty-one guilds, instead of from the more important ones only; these were directed to be chosen every two months (afterwards extended

[1] Dante in the *Inferno* (Canto x. ver. 91) alludes to this act, which occurred only five years before he was born

to a longer period); while it was ruled that no noble should be eligible as a member of the Signoria. The president of the latter body was the Gonfaloniere, chosen from among the members of the Signoria, and elected for a similar short period. Nor did even this satisfy Florence's fiercely democratic instincts. Although all power was vested in the representatives of the various guilds, yet on any large question the great bell, "the Vacca," in the tower of the Palazzo della Signoria,[1] summoned the whole male population into the square below, when the question was decided (ostensibly, at any rate) "by popular acclamation." This form of government continued for a hundred and fifty years; it had been established about twenty years at the time our story begins.

Passionately indeed was Florence enamoured of freedom. In a struggle of some two hundred years she had first gradually shaken herself free from subordination to the emperors, then fought against and thrown off the power of the nobles, and lastly had established "the most republican republic the world has ever seen." And in deep dread of being brought again under the yoke she had developed so great a jealousy of any action, either by an individual or a family, tending, however remotely, to threaten her independence, that this feeling had become a mania. There was a very short shrift in Florence for any one suspected of harbouring an intention of exalting himself into any position of authority above that of an ordinary citizen.

[1] The height of the tower is 330 feet; it commanded all the main streets of the city.

Florence was at this time at a high level of power, ruling over various subject cities, and constantly increasing her territory by little wars with neighbouring states. Republics such as Florence were of a peculiar kind, since only the citizens of the capital city possessed any political power. None others were allowed any voice in the policy of the state. This complete subjection to the capital city accounts for the fierce struggles of Pisa, Prato, Pistoia, Volterra, and other cities gradually conquered by Florence, against being subdued by her. It is also, no doubt, the reason why history at this period always speaks of "Florence" to denote that state which at a later period we speak of as "Tuscany."

As regards trade and commerce, Florence was at this time the most flourishing state in Europe. Her citizens owned banks in all countries, and the golden florin[1] had become the general European standard of value; marking the leading position in commerce held by Florence.[2] Macaulay, speaking of the revenue about this time, says:—

"The revenue of the Republic amounted to three hundred thousand florins: a sum which, allowing for the depreciation of the precious metals, was at least equivalent to six hundred thousand pounds sterling: a larger sum than England and Ireland, two centuries later, yielded to Elizabeth."[3]

[1] Thus the ancient connection of Florence with England in commerce is still kept in memory by our English silver coin of this name. The gold florin continued to hold its credit in Europe until the Republic was destroyed in 1530. As regards the value of the gold florin, the silver florin, the *scudo* and the ducat, *see* Appendix III.

[2] The whole of our modern system of banking was originated by the Florentine bankers, which Florence's widespread trade enabled them to carry out.

[3] Macaulay's Essay on Machiavelli. The equivalent would be considerably higher now.

The chief trade was in wool and woollen cloth, both that produced by Florence itself and that sent there from other countries to be dyed and refined by a secret process, and re-exported: a trade memorialised in the still existing names of two celebrated streets in Florence, the "Calimala" (or Calimara)[1] and the "Pelleceria." And the guild of the wool merchants was the most important in Florence; so much so that to this guild was committed the work of building the cathedral.[2] The principal part of the trade of Florence was with England.

(ii) Turning now to the larger world outside Florence we find the other states in Europe situated as follows:—

Venice, a republic of a very different kind and ruled by an oligarchy of nobles, was rapidly advancing to the height of her power, having in 1380 crushed her maritime rival Genoa, and was year by year extending her territories by fresh conquests.

Milan, an imperial duchy, was under the rule of her great Duke, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, the most capable of that family, the builder of the cathedral of Milan and the Certosa of Pavia. He had conquered almost all northern Italy (extending his dominions even as far as Perugia and Spoleto), was at this time only resisted by Florence, and was in full expectation of shortly subduing Florence also, when he would make himself King of Italy.

Naples-and-Sicily, a kingdom, but of the

[1] From the Greek words καλὸς μαλλός—"beautiful white," or "beautiful fleece."

[2] Their emblem of the lamb may be seen on the cathedral walls.

feeblest kind, was in its usual state of anarchy, the bone of contention between the rival houses of Anjou and Arragon, as it had been for a hundred and fifty years.

The Papacy. The situation of the Papacy at this time was most deplorable. There had in 1378 begun "the great schism," with rival Popes at Avignon and Rome: a state of things which had brought down the Papacy to the very dust. For there was here no case of an anti-Pope; both Popes had been duly elected, and each had an equal right to be considered the true Pope. On the side of the French Pope were France, Scotland, Spain, Portugal, Savoy, and Lorraine; on the side of the Italian Pope, were England, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, and Poland. Whereas salvation was held to depend on being in communion with the true Pope, none during all this period could feel sure that he was so; while it was at any rate certain that one-half of Europe was not. The position was intolerable; and its results during the forty years it lasted were such as to degrade the Papacy to the utmost depth of humiliation.

As regards the remaining countries of Europe:—in England Henry IV. had just usurped the kingdom from Richard II., whom he had murdered; in France Charles VI. was king, but was mad, and the country in the greatest disorder; Germany was a mass of insignificant states, and the Emperor almost a cypher, the seven princely "electors" invariably choosing as emperor some prince of small dominions and power who would be unable to oppose their own assumption of independence;

in the Eastern Empire Constantinople was being closely pressed by the Ottoman Turks; Spain was not as yet one country, Arragon and Castile being still petty independent kingdoms, while all the southern half of Spain was held by the Saracens, or, as they were called, the Moors.

The above is an outline of the general state of Europe before those great changes began in which the Medici were to play so large a part.

The Florence in which Giovanni di Bicci passed his life, though very different in aspect from that with which we are acquainted, nevertheless contained a good deal which we should still recognise. The Baptistery, then already many hundred years old, was much the same as now. So also the Bargello, built about a hundred and fifty years before this time; and close to it the Badia, built in 1330. The Palazzo della Signoria (known to us as the Palazzo Vecchio), built in 1298, was, as to the front portion, much as we see it, but did not extend at the back down the Via de' Gondi, while along the front ran a raised platform, the *ringhiera*, from which proclamations were made. The Loggia de' Lanzi had lately been completed. The cathedral,[1] which had been building for over a hundred years, was still unfinished; and its great dome had not even been begun, while many doubted whether so vast a space could ever be covered in this way. Its beautiful campanile, "Giotto's tower," was finished. The Ponte Vecchio, with its shops (though not then jewellers'

[1] Also begun in 1298, as can be seen by its foundation stone near the campanile; not in 1294, as nearly always stated.

shops), was as now; except, of course, for the "Passaggio" on the roof of the shops, constructed long afterwards. Of the two chief churches, Sta. Croce and Sta. Maria Novella, the latter was completed, except for its façade, while Sta. Croce was approaching completion. The city was surrounded by its ancient and picturesque walls, which are now gone, but its main streets still follow the same course as then, and many of them present much the same general appearance. Or San Michele, the curious square church, built by the guild of the wool merchants, was nearly finished; and behind it stood as now the guild-house of this celebrated "Arte della Lana." As we look at this old house of the great guild of wool (with their emblem of the lamb over the door), and think of the many works in which this guild were then occupied in Florence, we cannot but be impressed with the thought of how many other things besides money-making engaged the attention of this enlightened body of merchants, and of how much in Florence's after-glory has had its birth in that now little-noticed old building.[1]

And it was in connection with these things that a movement was about to begin which was soon to be the paramount question in Florence. For in our review of the Florence of 1400 we have also to think of the existing state of things in regard to Art and Learning. These, though in the previous century roused from their long sleep by Dante,

[1] Since this was written, this interesting old building has received a modern dress. Its restorers have, however, been careful to maintain the character of the building as little impaired as possible.

Giotto, and Petrarch, appeared to have sunk back again into slumber. Dante, whose "swanlike dirge of the departing middle ages" had inspired all mankind for a time, had died eighty years before, and no successor to him had arisen. Giotto,[1] the shepherd-boy whose kiss had aroused the sleeping beauty, Art, from her nine centuries of slumber in her Byzantine palace, had died sixty-three years before; his great pupil Orcagna had died thirty-two years before; and the painters of the time (the Giotteschi) had no idea beyond that of a slavish copying of Giotto, and so had sunk into a conventionalism almost as complete as that Byzantine tradition from which Giotto had rescued Art. Lastly, Petrarch, the great scholar who had led men to study the long-buried writings of the classic age, had passed away twenty-six years before, and no other like him had arisen.[2] Thus, when the year 1400 dawned it seemed as though the movement which had begun in the time of Dante and Giotto was merely a passing phase, already moribund, if not defunct.

It was, however, not so. There was soon to be a fresh movement destined far to surpass all that had gone before. And the latter half of Giovanni di Bicci's life, with which we have to do, the period from 1400 to 1428, is the time of this "morning" of the Renaissance; of that extraordinary outburst of Art in every branch, which, felt in some degree in other cities of Italy also at this time, seemed in Florence to permeate the whole people with its

[1] With Giotto must be coupled his Sienese contemporary Duccio. But Duccio's influence throughout Italy was so infinitesimal compared with that of Giotto that the latter takes entire precedence.

[2] Boccaccio had also died within a year of Petrarch.

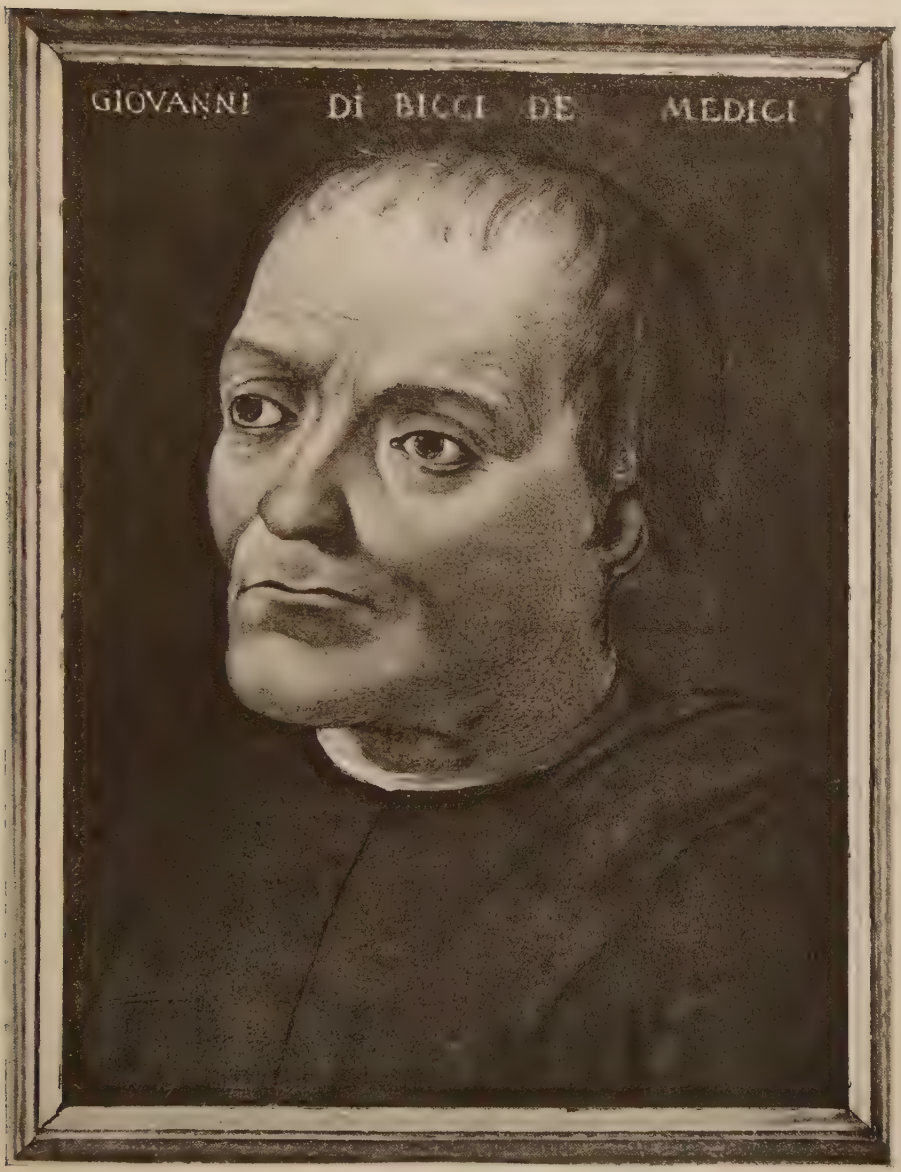
throbbing life, producing results the influence of which was, before another hundred years were over, to be felt to the utmost bounds of Europe.

Giovanni di Bicci. 1400-1418.

Giovanni di Bicci,[1] with his wife, Piccarda Bueri, and his two sons, Cosimo and Lorenzo (who in the year 1400 were boys of eleven and five), lived first in an old house in the Via Larga, and then in one which still stands in the Piazza del Duomo; and the familiar view which daily met Giovanni's eye from the windows of his house must have been that of the slowly-rising walls and dome of the cathedral, begun so long before, and intended by Florence to be grander than any yet built.

By the year 1400 Giovanni di Bicci was a man in middle age, gracious in manner, retiring in disposition, and much respected by all around him. He has received very little notice from historians, but he was the author of various important works for the benefit of his countrymen and for the encouragement of art. He was distinguished for his ability as a financier, and for his "prudence" (the quality always specially admired by the Florentines), and had made himself highly popular with the people by the liberal way in which he spent his wealth for the public benefit, and by his constant readiness to be their champion in the never-ceasing struggle against the nobles. Being regardless of fame or notoriety, it is only here

[1] Plate II. This portrait, by Bronzino, was taken from an old one by Zenobio di Benetto di Caroccio Strozzi, which is still in the Uffizi Gallery, though in a much ruined state.



GIOVANNI DI BICCI.
By Bronzino.

Alinari] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

and there in the history of the time that notice of him is to be found. Moreover, during his lifetime the chief influence in Florence was possessed by the Albizzi family,[1] who, notwithstanding the law affecting the nobles, managed (chiefly by influencing the elections) still to exercise power. Meanwhile Giovanni was laying the foundations of a family which was ere long to obliterate all memory of the sway of the Albizzi.

The first occasion when we find him specially mentioned is in the year 1401. In the picture of the Florence of that age one point has still to be noted without which that picture would not be complete, namely, the terrible outbreaks of the plague which again and again devastated the city in those days, keeping the thought of death and the hereafter ever present in the minds of all men. And our story opens in the midst of one of these awful visitations; and again, as in 1348 and so many other occasions, large numbers of all classes were being daily carried off by this terrible disease. In this distress Florence determined on a costly votive offering to be placed in her oldest and most highly venerated church, San Giovanni Battista (better known as the Baptistery), and that this offering should take the form of two pairs of very elaborate bronze doors. An international competition was instituted to settle who should execute this work, and Giovanni di Bicci, as a leading citizen and a great patron of art, was appointed one of the judges in this competition. It is an interesting and significant

[1] For a full account of the political history of Florence during the time of Giovanni di Bicci, *see* Hyett's *Florence* (chap. xi.).

coincidence that the first mention we have of the first of the Medici should be his taking a prominent part in an event which has always been held as the "birthday" of the Renaissance in Art.

During the next seventeen years (1402-1418) the chief notices which we have of Giovanni are those showing his quiet but steady advancement in public affairs. In 1402 we find him elected by his guild, that of the bankers (Arte del Cambio), as its "Prior," which made him a member of the Government; and we find him again thus elected in 1408 and in 1411. It is specially recorded that he kept aloof from the many political intrigues of the time, and that these and subsequent higher honours were forced upon him unsought.

In 1417 Florence suffered another of those terrible visitations of the plague which afflicted her on so many occasions. This time it carried off 16,000 of the inhabitants. Giovanni did his utmost to relieve the many sufferings of the people, while we are told that he "did not confine his help only to the poor, but was no less ready to alleviate the misfortunes of the rich."

We must now glance at what had been going on in Europe during these eighteen years.

Contemporary historical events.[1] 1400-1418.

The first eighteen years of the fifteenth century were years of various great events in Europe, all of which closely affected Florence and its Signoria.

In 1400 the Emperor Wenceslaus was deposed

[1] Throughout this history of the Medici, wherein contemporary historical events must frequently be mentioned (more particularly in

by the "electors" for his worthless, savage, and drunken character. In his place they chose Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine.

In 1401 the Turks, under Bajazet, having at last come to the final stage of the long campaign of centuries against the eastern half of the Roman Empire, and having reached and begun to besiege the capital itself — Constantinople, the Eastern Emperor, Manuel Paleologus, who had in 1391 succeeded his father, John Paleologus (John VI.), like him visited Italy, Germany, France, and England to try to rouse them to aid in saving Constantinople, and prevent such a dire calamity to all Europe as its fall into the hands of the Turks. He was received everywhere with imperial honours and much sympathy; but as regards Italy, the Papacy was paralysed by the great schism, and also would do nothing unless the Eastern Church would agree to acknowledge the supremacy of the Church of Rome, while the other Italian states were at almost constant war, and threatened at the moment with extinction by Milan. Germany was in chaos, the Emperor having just been deposed. In France the King was out of his mind, and the country in the utmost confusion. And in England the King was a usurper, threatened with civil war. So the Emperor Manuel Paleologus had to return as unsuccessful as his father had been. Help, however, came to Constantinople from an unexpected quarter. The Turkish dominions were suddenly invaded by the Tartars under Timour (or Tamarlane), which called away the Sultan

the earlier portion of their story), it is not attempted to do more than indicate, as briefly as will suffice for the purpose, such principal events as have a bearing on the history of the Medici.

Bajazet from his attack on Constantinople; and at the battle of Angora in the following year he was defeated and taken prisoner by Timour. This defeat shattered for a time the power of the Ottoman Turks, and gave Constantinople a last lease of life for another fifty years.

In 1402 Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan, suddenly died in the midst of his schemes of conquest, relieving Florence of her most formidable enemy, and enabling her four years later to conquer and annex a part of his dominions, Pisa. This conquest of Pisa extended Florence's territory to the coast and gave her a seaport.

In 1409, in Florence's new subject city, took place the Council of Pisa. The effects of the "great schism," with half the countries of Europe recognising one Pope and the other half another, became at length so intolerable that all Europe began to cry out for "a reformation of the Church in head and members," a phrase constantly on men's lips all through this fifteenth century; and this was the first of three attempts to that end. The cardinals of both the rival parties deserted their Popes and summoned a Council of the whole Western Church at Pisa to solve the difficulty. To this Council there came about 200 bishops, nearly 300 abbots, over 400 doctors of theology, and the representatives of most of the sovereigns of Europe.

The primary point to be fought out was whether a Council was supreme over a Pope, and therefore able to reform errors in the Papacy, or whether a Pope was above a Council. The sixth century would have been amazed that such a

question could be debated, the supreme authority in the Church throughout the early centuries having been a General Council of equal and independent bishops, each himself under the authority of such a Council. But since then one bishop had exalted himself step by step, until the time had come that such a question could be debated.

However, the Council, by the mere fact of assembling on its own authority, and in defiance of two Popes, virtually declared itself the highest power in the Church. Moreover, it at once proceeded formally to lay down the same. And this done, it deposed both the rival Popes for their crimes. Then the Council made the mistake which nullified all its work: instead of proceeding to reform the abuses in the Church, and only after this had been done electing a fresh Pope, it elected a Pope (Alexander V.) before attempting to carry out reforms. The natural result followed: Alexander V. promptly found means to adjourn the Council, nominally for three years, practically for an indefinite period.

This futile conclusion of the first attempt to reform the Church left matters worse than before. The two deposed Popes refused to accept the sentence of the Council; so that the only result was that there were now three rival Popes instead of two. And so the "great schism" continued. Florence, for allowing that detested thing a Council to assemble in one of her subject cities, was, on behalf of one of the three Popes (Gregory XII.), attacked by King Ladislas of Naples, and while the Council was sitting, had to protect its deliberations

and her own territory by force of arms. With the result that the Florentine army captured Rome.

In 1410 Pope Alexander V. died, and was succeeded by Pope John XXIII. And in the same year Sigismund, King of Bohemia, the younger brother of Wenceslaus, was elected Emperor.

In 1413 in England Henry IV. died, and was succeeded by his brilliant son, Henry V. And in 1415 the latter invaded France, because that country would not give him Catherine, the King's third daughter, and with her Normandy, Maine, and Anjou. Then followed the great battle of Agincourt, with its crushing defeat for France.

In the same year as this great battle between France and England there took place the Council of Constance, the second attempt to reform the Church. This Council was summoned by the Emperor Sigismund, that holder of the imperial dignity whom Carlyle sarcastically calls "Sigismund super grammaticam."[1] The widely representative and authoritative character of this Council may be judged by the list of those who composed it. It included 27 archbishops, 300 bishops, 20 cardinals, 300 abbots and doctors of theology, and 14 deputies of various universities; while there also attended its deliberations 26 princes, 140 counts, and about 4000 priests. It sat for over three years at

[1] Sigismund, in opening the Council, and speaking, of course, in Latin, used a feminine adjective to a noun which is neuter. He said, "Date operam ut illa *nefanda* schisma eradicetur." A trembling ecclesiastic behind him whispered to him, "Pardon, your Majesty, but 'schisma' is of the neuter gender." Whereupon the Emperor loftily replied, "Ego Imperator Romanus sum, et *super grammaticam*" ("I am the Roman Emperor, and above grammar").

Constance, whose chief fame it has made. It was purposely held out of Italy, whose bishops could not be depended upon to give an independent opinion. And since these latter outnumbered those of all other countries put together, it was ruled that to prevent their having an undue preponderance the voting should be by nations.[1]

This Council put an end to the "great schism," which for more than a generation had been the scandal of Christendom. Having met and appointed the Emperor Sigismund to preside, and having formally declared its authority over all ecclesiastics, the Pope included, it deposed all the three rival Popes; and this time they were unable to refuse obedience. Pope John XXIII. was in addition on account of his crimes imprisoned for three years in the castle of Heidelberg. But the Council then made the same mistake as that of Pisa, and before proceeding to reform the abuses in the Church, elected a fresh Pope, Martin V. He at once used all his power to prevent any real reforms being passed, concluded separate *concordats* with each national party, and terminated the Council as soon as possible. And so this Council, like the former one, failed to achieve that reformation of the Church which all good men throughout Europe desired.

[1] The Church of England sent six bishops to this Council: viz., those of London, Salisbury, Bath, Chester, Norwich, and Lichfield. The most celebrated of them was Robert Hallam, Bishop of Salisbury. They were sent with specific instructions from the King of England, Henry V. We are told that on one occasion they threw themselves in a body at the feet of the Emperor Sigismund, as the successor of Constantine and of Charlemagne, and entreated him "to pull the Pope out of his seat"; and that "The bold English bishop, the Bishop of Salisbury, told the Pope to his face that the Council was superior to the Pope."

One other thing this Council did which has brought upon it and the Emperor Sigismund lasting infamy. This was the burning of John Hus and Jerome of Prague for teaching the opinions of Wickliff in Bohemia, and notwithstanding that they were at the Council under the Emperor's own written safe-conduct. The disgraceful and only too well-known argument was employed (here, perhaps, for the first time) that faith need not be kept with those who were heretics. Sigismund thus dishonoured his word because he feared that otherwise the Council, to bring about which he had laboured earnestly, would break up. They were burnt at Constance (1416) with every circumstance of odious cruelty; and all else achieved by this Council is for ever blackened by this detestable deed. This action provoked such indignation in Bohemia that it caused a furious war, in which priests were burnt in pitch, whole towns destroyed, commerce ruined, the death of King Wenceslaus caused, and the Emperor Sigismund three times defeated, and finally driven out of the country.

These years (1400-1418) are also those of the extensive conquests made by Florence's powerful rival, Venice. Between 1400 and 1414 Venice conquered Verona, Padua, Vicenza, Belluno, and Feltre; also Lepanto and Patras; also Guastalla, Casalmaggiore, and Brescello. In 1416 Venice gained a great naval victory over the Turkish fleet at Gallipoli; and in the next few years subdued all the towns on the Dalmatian coast, besides waging successful war against Hungary. Venice was at this time at the height of her glory, growing richer

and more powerful every year, with annual exports valued at 10,000,000 ducats, while the wealth and magnificence of her governing class was unbounded.

Meanwhile Florence was in these years laying the basis of a very different kind of glory, the results of which were to be of much more permanent importance to the world at large. And this wondrous morning of the Renaissance in Art, which shone forth in his time, and with which he was intimately connected, must ever be the main interest in looking at the life of this first of the Medici; especially since owing to his retiring disposition we only see occasional glimpses of him among events at that time forming all the principal life of Florence. Art. 1400-1418.

The fifteenth century started from the very beginning on its wonderful career in this respect. In the first year of the new century occurred that event already mentioned, the competition for the execution of the bronze doors of the Baptistery. The work being a votive offering on the part of the entire city was intended to be of the very best description, for which reason this competition to determine by whom it should be executed was instituted "among artists of every country." The subject fixed was a bronze panel representing the sacrifice of Isaac.

It is impossible to describe the rivalry and enthusiasm called forth by this competition: it was a time when the stirrings of Art were felt throughout the entire population of Florence, and the excitement over the matter was intense. When the models were sent in, three of them were

considered superior to all others, those of Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, and Jacopo della Quercia, the two former being Florentines and the third a native of Siena.[1] They were all quite young men, Jacopo della Quercia being twenty-seven, Ghiberti twenty-three, and Brunelleschi twenty-two. After further consultation the panel by Ghiberti was judged the best, and the construction of the bronze doors was given to him. The models by Ghiberti and Brunelleschi are preserved in the museum of the Bargello, and there is no doubt that the decision of the judges was correct. Brunelleschi in disgust went off to Rome, declaring that he would learn another art in which Ghiberti should not be able to excel him. This he did, and became the great architect of his time.

Ghiberti (1). Ghiberti began his work at once, and was occupied on the first pair of doors (which represent scenes in the life of Christ) for the next twenty-two years. The labour expended on this work, which was more perfect than anything seen in Art up to that time, and which to this day has never been surpassed, was incalculable. Again and again the panels were recast, Ghiberti always striving after something more perfect, and his patience and determination being so great that he again and again destroyed the results he achieved, being resolved not to desist from his labours until he attained the ideal after which he strove. And very wonderful was the aim which he set before himself.

[1] "Donatello did not compete, being only a boy, but he must have been familiar with every stage in the contest, which excited the deepest interest in Tuscany."—(Lord Balcarres.)

In Ghiberti's hands bronze reliefs became in reality pictures in bronze,[1] even the clouds being represented, and the effect of distance being marvellously rendered. Ghiberti himself tells us (and what he says, while simple enough to us all now, is most interesting when we remember that this is in the early days of Art) as follows:—

"In modelling these reliefs I strove to imitate nature to the utmost. . . . I sought to understand how forms strike upon the eye, and how the theoretical part of sculptural and pictorial art should be managed. Working with the utmost care and diligence I introduced into some of my panels as many as a hundred figures; these I modelled upon different planes, so that those nearest to the eye might appear larger, and those more remote smaller in proportion."

As this work proceeded its influence on Art in general was extraordinary. Ghiberti had to employ a number of assistants, and these pictures in bronze, with their life-like figures and excellent relief, became, as the details of their execution were followed out, a perfect school of Art, in which all who had either the sculptor's or the painter's instinct learnt valuable lessons. Besides the effect thus produced on the Art world generally, two at least of the assistants employed by Ghiberti in this work learnt therein that which enabled them afterwards to attain fame exceeding even his, the painter Masaccio and the sculptor Donatello.

[1] Ruskin has found fault with them on this very ground, as trenching on the sphere belonging properly to painting and to sculpture. But it was just thus that this work became the invaluable school which it did for both the painter's and the sculptor's art.

Then followed in 1412, while the above work was still in progress, another event likewise contributing to help forward the outburst in Art. This was the completion by the guild of the wool merchants of their church of Or San Michele, and the decision to adorn the outside of the walls with statues of Apostles and Saints, each statue to be given by one of the principal guilds. Hence fresh emulation, each guild desiring its statue to be the finest, and all the best sculptors vieing with each other in the production of these statues; Or San Michele thus becoming another centre of Art inspiration. In this way there were produced during the next few years:—

In 1412 Donatello's statue of St Peter.
„ 1413 Donatello's statue of St Mark.
„ 1414 Ghiberti's statue of St John the Baptist.
„ 1415 Ghiberti's statue of St Stephen.
„ 1416 Donatello's celebrated statue of St George.
„ 1418 Ghiberti's statue of St Matthew.

Statues by other masters followed in subsequent years.

Giovanni di Bicci. 1418-1428.

Life in Florence in Giovanni's day was a very different thing from that which it became two generations later. Anything in the direction of luxury was condemned by plain-living Florence as a sign of degeneracy. And when Giovanni, in order to give assistance to struggling artists, had the whole of the walls of his house decorated with frescoes (a form of decoration hitherto confined to churches), we may be sure that this action was looked upon by many as a

questionable innovation betokening a reprehensible tendency to voluptuousness.

For very austere indeed was the style of living then customary. The palaces of even the most wealthy were furnished with a plainness which scorned all idea of either beauty or comfort. Heavy tables and straight-backed wooden chairs covered with leather; bare stone floors, desperately cold in winter; whitewashed walls, only covered with tapestry on state occasions; a huge *credenza* containing vases, glass, majolica, and silver, for use at banquets; wide, hard, comfortless beds, and great chests containing linen and clothes: such were the surroundings, and such the only furniture considered necessary even in the palaces of the noblest families.

As to dress, there was the same austerity; and here Florence enacted very strict laws to check undue extravagance. These laws laid down with the most minute exactness what a lady's dress might be like, and what it might not be like; and the same as regards the men. No lady might have her dress made of other material, nor of greater length or breadth, than was laid down; nor wear any of numerous forbidden ornaments. While for the men was prescribed, for all above the class of artisans, the plain garment, buttoned straight down the front and looking like a priest's cassock, which is to be seen in all the earlier portraits in this book. We do not hear much about the ladies of this period; it was not until a generation or two later that they began to come forth from the seclusion considered correct in Giovanni's time; but they evidently fought vigorously

against these laws about dress. They evaded them in numberless ingenious ways, and waged an untiring warfare with the authorities on the subject. In this contest, which went on perpetually between the ladies and the officials charged with seeing that these sumptuary laws were obeyed, for which thorny task "foreigners" (*i.e.*, non-Florentines) were purposely appointed, the officers concerned had evidently no pleasant time. One of them reports as follows:—

"When, obeying the orders ye gave me, I went out to seek for the forbidden ornaments of your women, they met me with arguments such as are not to be found in any book of laws. There cometh a woman with the peak of her hood fringed out and twined around her head. My notary saith, 'Tell me your name, for you have a peak with fringes.' Then the good woman taketh this peak, which is fastened round her hood with a pin, and, holding it in her hand, she declareth that it is a wreath. Then going further he findeth one wearing many buttons in front of her dress, and he saith unto her, 'Ye are not allowed to wear these buttons.' But she answers, 'These are not buttons but studs, and if ye do not believe me, look—they have no loops, and moreover there are no buttonholes.' Then my notary goeth to another who is wearing ermine, and saith, 'Now what can she say to this? Ye are wearing ermine.' And he prepares to write down her name. But the woman answers, 'Do not write me down, for this is not ermine, it is the fur of a suckling.' Saith the notary, 'What is this suckling?' And the woman replies, 'It is an animal.'"[1]

[1] *Women of Florence*, by Isidoro del Lungo.

No wonder that the authorities remark, "We do but knock our heads against a wall"; and that in the next generation these sumptuary laws were gradually allowed to become a dead letter, the ladies having gained the victory.

In 1418 we hear of Giovanni giving a large sum of money to assist one whose "deservedly incurred misfortunes," we are told, "roused his pity." In conjunction with the chief of the party of the nobles, Niccolò da Uzzano, he obtained after strong efforts the release of the deposed and imprisoned Pope John XXIII., on condition that a ransom of 38,000 ducats should be paid; and the whole of this sum Giovanni himself gave. Pope John on being released came, broken down and destitute, to Florence, and was given an asylum there by Giovanni, who, when the deposed Pope died in the following year, erected to his memory the beautiful monument which is to be seen in the Baptistery.[1]

In 1419 we find Giovanni at his own cost erecting and endowing an important charitable institution which remains to the present day, the Foundling Hospital of Florence, the "Ospedale degli Innocenti." And in carrying out this charitable work he also managed to help forward the cause of Art. Brunelleschi had by this time returned to Florence, having in the intervening years carried out his determination to learn another

[1] When the inscription was put up (after Giovanni's death) Pope Martin V. objected to the words "Quondam Papa," and wrote to the Signoria demanding that they should be erased. The reply was a refusal, written by Cosimo, and couched in the words of Pontius Pilate, saying, "Quod scripsi, scripsi." And there they still remain.

branch of art in which Ghiberti should not be able to rival him; but he had not yet obtained any opportunity of displaying his powers. Giovanni gave him this opportunity by entrusting the construction of his new hospital to him. Though afterwards eclipsed by his other achievements, the Foundling Hospital remains notable as being the great architect's first prominent work.

In 1421 Giovanni received the highest mark of esteem which his country could confer. In spite of the opposition of the nobles, who urged that it was unsafe to allow one so wealthy and so popular to hold that office, he was, without any seeking for it on his part, elected Gonfaloniere.

In 1422 Florence entered on a four years' war with Milan, whose Duke, Filippo Maria Visconti, the cowardly and treacherous son of Gian Galeazzo, was threatening to absorb all northern Italy. Giovanni di Bicci was against this war, feeling that Florence was not strong enough for it, and could not afford the cost. And in it Florence suffered no less than six serious defeats within a space of about two years. Nevertheless she gained in the end the object for which she fought; after four years of war Venice joined her against Milan, with the eventual result that the designs of the Duke of Milan were frustrated, and he was forced to conclude a peace the terms of which were honourable to Florence. Thus twice during twenty-five years had Florence stood in the breach and prevented two successive Dukes of Milan from subduing all Italy. These two wars are said to have cost Florence a sum equal in our present money to £6,000,000 sterling.

In 1426 Giovanni succeeded in effecting, in spite of every kind of opposition from the nobles, the chief political measure of his life. This was his celebrated *catasto*, the new form of taxation devised by him. The main tax on the people had hitherto been an irregular poll-tax, which bore very unfairly upon them, and gave unlimited opportunities to the nobles to exercise oppression. It was consequently hated by the people. Giovanni worked out a scheme to substitute for this a fixed tax on property, which would be regular in its incidence and prevent the nobles from evading their due share of the general taxation, and by his weight and influence in the Signoria succeeded in getting this measure passed. And this, notwithstanding that it increased very largely the amount he would himself have to pay. The nobles were, of course, furious, and accused him of all sorts of ulterior motives; but Giovanni having no such motives went on his way undisturbed; and for this immense boon which he had procured for them, the people looked on him as their saviour and benefactor, and were ready to do anything for one who had fought thus strenuously on their behalf.[1]

In 1427 Giovanni performed his last act as a

[1] One or two modern writers, in the endeavour to detract from any credit due to the Medici, have attempted to maintain that Giovanni di Bicci was not the author of this tax at all, though even they have had to admit that he was universally held to be so by his countrymen, and have been unable to mention the name of any one else as its author. Even, however, were there not ample evidence of his authorship, the above fact alone would suffice; for in such a government as that of Florence, it would have been impossible that this universal credit should be given him by the people at the time it took place, for an important measure of which, not he, but some one else, was the author. Such writers are, moreover, refuted by those on their own side who attribute unworthy motives to him for the act.

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champion of the cause of the poorer classes. A number of the nobles, headed by Rinaldo degli Albizzi and Niccolò da Uzzano, held a secret meeting[1] to devise means for reducing the power of the people in the government. The plan they eventually settled upon was to put forward a suggestion to the Signoria to reduce the number of the inferior guilds, and also to remove the prohibition against members of the *nobili* being eligible for election to the Signoria, using the argument that the time had passed when such a prohibition was necessary.

Having elaborated the details of their plan, the *nobili* on a suitable occasion submitted their suggestion to the Signoria for discussion. The proposal in the manner in which it was put forward was a specious one, while its real object was kept carefully veiled. But Giovanni, ever on the watch to defend the cause of the people, fathomed its real intention. He exerted the whole weight of his influence to oppose the measure; and entirely through his vigorous opposition it was defeated. By this, the last act of his public life, he increased still more his popularity with the people. The wrath of the nobles was proportionate; and all the more so since they could not openly show it without disclosing to all what their object had been. Giovanni on this occasion showed the sagacity to detect, the courage to oppose, and the sound judgment to foil without an open conflict, a dangerous attempt to revolutionise the Government.

[1] It is said to have taken place in the church of Santo Stefano, near the Por Sta. Maria.

The chief events outside Italy during these years were the following:— Contemporary historical events. 1418-1428.

In 1420 Henry V. of England having by this time conquered all France north of the Loire, the Treaty of Troyes was executed. By this treaty the crown of France was secured to him (to the exclusion of the Dauphin Charles) whenever the mad king, Charles VI., should die; and meanwhile Henry was made Regent of France, and at last married to the French King's daughter, Catherine.

In 1422 Charles VI. and Henry V. both died, and the latter was succeeded by his six months' old son, Henry VI., the Earl of Bedford being appointed Regent of France on his behalf during his minority.

In 1425 the Emperor Manuel Paleologus died, and his son, John Paleologus (John VII.), succeeded him as Emperor of the Eastern Empire, by this time reduced to little more than its capital city, Constantinople.

In 1428 the regent Bedford, having gained several victories over the Dauphin Charles, crossed the Loire, and began his memorable siege of Orleans, the key to the south of France.

The years 1418 to 1428 were years of still further developments in that outburst of new life in the world of Art taking place in Florence. Art. 1418-1428.

In the year 1418 the cathedral, begun by Arnolfo di Cambio a hundred and twenty years before, and which when finished would be the largest then existing, was approaching completion.

But it still wanted its dome, and all concerned were in despair as to how a dome was ever to be thrown over so vast a space. At length Brunelleschi, who was then building the Foundling Hospital, came forward and offered to do it, but would not say how. There was great opposition to giving the task to him, and the reason is important as showing the conditions from which Art had gradually to emancipate itself.

Every citizen of Florence who aspired either to have any political rights, or to take any part in the important public works from time to time being executed, had to belong to one or other of the twenty-one guilds. The seven major guilds were (1) wool merchants, (2) dyers of foreign cloth, (3) silk merchants, (4) furriers, (5) bankers, (6) judges and lawyers, and (7) doctors and apothecaries. There was no special guild for the workers in art; the painters had to belong to the guild of apothecaries;[1] the architects and sculptors either to the guild of the wool merchants, or to that of the silk merchants. The fourteen minor guilds were simply those of the various trades, and had lesser privileges.[2]

Brunelleschi (1). Up to the time when Brunelleschi made the above refusal to announce his plans, every great public work such as this was done *collectively*, under the auspices of some particular guild, and anything like independent working in such matters was unprecedented. And

[1] The guild of the apothecaries was an important one, as their chemical knowledge was required in the preparation of the dyes on which the wool trade so largely depended. And the painters similarly needed their assistance in connection with the preparation of their colours.

[2] For many interesting details regarding the Florentine guilds, see *Florence*, by F. A. Hyett, pp. 32-37.

the whole work of erecting the cathedral was carried out by a Board of Works acting under the orders of the guild of the wool merchants. Brunelleschi, being of an independent character, detested this system, which hampered all artists much, but especially architects. Since his disappointment over the bronze doors he had spent nearly twenty years in studying architecture, more especially the ancient buildings at Rome, and was now confident that he knew a way of building the great dome, and without using any scaffolding, this point being the chief difficulty. But if he succeeded in building it, he desired that it should be *his*, and not that of the Board of Works; and did not want to tell his secret only to have it appropriated by a corporate body, who might also modify his designs. But this was just what the Board wished to be able to do; such novel independence was in their opinion most objectionable, and required putting down; and so there was a tremendous contest.[1]

However, eventually Brunelleschi prevailed, simply because all knew by this time that he was the only man who could construct the dome; the work was given to him, and the construction began in 1420. And though even after this there were constant battles, still by degrees the great dome slowly rose on his designs and under his superintendence.

[1] It was at one of these stormy meetings that Brunelleschi's illustration of his point by the problem of making an egg stand on its end occurred. When all had tried it and failed, Brunelleschi simply cracked the end of the egg and so made it stand; whereupon they said: "But we could all have done that." To which he replied: "Yes, and so it would be if I told my design for building the dome." On another occasion Brunelleschi's temper became so unbearable to the Board that he was by their orders forcibly carried out of the house and deposited on his back in the street.

It was built without any scaffolding, and on a principle Brunelleschi had learnt from studying the roof of the Pantheon at Rome. He tells us that managing while at Rome to get on the roof of the Pantheon, and to take off some of the outer stones, so as to inspect the ribbing of the vault, and discovering the way the blocks of stone were dovetailed into one another so as to be almost self-supporting, this gave him his ideas for the dome of Florence; while it also led him to conceive how to utilise cross-beams to gird the ribs together, and how a second dome within the first would strengthen the whole. The dome is built on this principle, one dome within the other and the two bound together so as to support each other, with a space between sufficient for a staircase, and each dome resting on a "drum." It was the first of the kind ever constructed, was considered the wonder of the age, and is the largest double cupola in Europe.[1] Domes had, of course, been a feature of Byzantine architecture, but the great change made by the Renaissance was that caused by lifting the dome on a "drum," the dome thus becoming the chief feature of the building. It is interesting to notice how, as it had been with Learning, and as it had been with Sculpture, so here again with Architecture we have a resurrection of the long past; and Brunelleschi

[1] The dome of St Peter's at Rome, built more than a hundred years later, and for which it formed the model, is 1 foot less in diameter, the respective diameters being:—Duomo at Florence (inside measurement), 138½ feet; St Peter's at Rome, 137½ feet. The Pantheon is larger than either, being 142 feet in diameter. Both are, however, much larger than the Pantheon when viewed from outside, being double cupolas, and the above measurements being those of the inner dome only.

receives his inspiration from the Pantheon, built by Marcus Agrippa fourteen hundred years before.

In 1425 Giovanni di Bicci gave a commission to Brunelleschi which resulted in one of the three chief works[1] for which the latter has obtained fame, the church of San Lorenzo, now so famous on account of its tombs of the Medici family. This church, one of the most ancient in Italy, having been consecrated[2] by St Ambrose himself in 393, was in 1423 falling into ruins. Giovanni now undertook to rebuild it, devoting thereto a large amount of his fortune;[3] and after his time it was when completed endowed by his descendants, and became the family church of the Medici.

On this church Brunelleschi lavished all his talent, and it is one of his finest creations. Symonds, speaking of it, says:[4]—

"Not a form or detail in the whole church is at variance with classic precedent, and yet the general effect resembles nothing that we possess of antique work. It is a masterpiece of intelligent Renaissance adaptation."

Following as he did the sobriety and correctness of the classic style, the keynote of which is *harmony*, Brunelleschi's buildings are remarkable for this latter characteristic. They never give one that jar which, like a discordant note in music, is produced by a falsity in architecture, and whose effect we feel even though perhaps unable to point out

[1] The other two being the dome of the cathedral and the church of Santo Spirito.

[2] It was dedicated in 393 to St Lawrence in memory of Laurentius, the son of a rich widow, Giuliana, at whose expense the church was built. St Ambrose's sermon on the occasion of its consecration is still in existence.

[3] Seven other families joined with him; but Giovanni initiated the proposal, chose the architect, and gave the bulk of the money.

[4] *Renaissance of the Fine Arts.*

wherein it lies. His churches of San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito are both of them examples of this characteristic of harmony, and to it is undoubtedly due their indescribably peaceful effect.[1]

Ghiberti (2).

In 1424 the first pair of bronze doors on which Ghiberti had so long been at work were at last finished. They had taken him twenty-two years. The enthusiasm when they were set up was tremendous; nothing like this in Art had been seen before; all Florence crowded to see them; and the Signoria, who never quitted the Palazzo della Signoria in a body except on the greatest occasions, came in state to applaud the work and do honour to the artist. When we think of all that this work had called forth in every branch of Art during the long years he had been employed on it, of the genius which had created this wonderful new departure, and of the determined perseverance by which alone the work was brought to such perfection, we are led to feel[2] that Ghiberti deserved any honour which his countrymen could confer upon him.

Ghiberti, by this time a man of forty-five, at once set to work on his second pair of doors, which were destined to take him still longer, and to surpass even the first pair in excellence.

Masaccio.

In 1423, seven years after Donatello had produced his statue of St George, three years after Brunelleschi had begun to construct his

[1] Brunelleschi's other principal buildings are, the Pazzi Chapel in the cloisters of Sta. Croce (considered "a jewel of classic architecture adapted to the Renaissance spirit"), Palazzo Pazzi (now Quaratesi), Palazzo Busini, and Palazzo Barbadori.

[2] Especially in these days, when the great Chancellor, Lord Eldon's, motto, "*Sat cito, si sat bene*" (Quick enough, if well enough, done) is so little in favour.

dome, and one year before Ghiberti finished his first pair of bronze doors, Painting showed that same new burst of life which had already been shown by Architecture and Sculpture. For in that year Masaccio, afterwards so famous, and destined to advance the art of Painting by so immense a step that he became the leader of all painters after him, began his frescoes in the Brancacci chapel of the church of the Carmelites,[1] the Carmine.

The influence of Ghiberti's work of the bronze doors is in the case of Masaccio directly traceable. Born in the year of the competition of 1401, he worked as a boy under Ghiberti on the panels of these doors, and there learnt the knowledge of form, effect of light and shade, and other secrets which he afterwards elaborated in his paintings. In these, by a proper use of light and shade, he gave roundness to the limbs; was the first to give to figures natural attitudes and a life-like appearance, and to drapery natural folds; improved the drawing of heads and hands; and, as Vasari says, "improved everything."

But this was not recognised until after his short life had ended. He was crushed with poverty,[2] burdened with the maintenance of younger brothers, always ready to do a good turn to others but careless about his own affairs, and, entirely absorbed in his painting, was almost unknown. Dying at the age of twenty-seven, only four years after he began painting these frescoes,

[1] In the best of these, the fresco of *The Tribute Money*, Masaccio has given us a portrait of himself in the young Apostle standing on the right of the tax-gatherer, next to the portico.

[2] The register of the *catasto* for the year 1427 shows that he was in great destitution.

his life was so short, and he was so hampered by debt, that he has left very few works; except for two small unimportant pictures at Berlin, and one in the Accademia at Florence, no picture of Masaccio's is in any of the galleries of Europe, and all his fame rests on the frescoed walls of one small chapel in Florence.[1]

Nevertheless, with him Painting entered on a new epoch, and the Brancacci chapel has become sacred ground to all painters, since there almost all the great masters after him, including, Vasari tells us, Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael,[2] Michelangelo,[3] Andrea del Sarto, Fra Bartolommeo, and many of lesser genius, have studied and copied the works of one who is the inaugurator of all that we understand by modern painting.

"In this chapel wrought
One of the few, Nature's interpreters,
The few, whom genius gives as lights to shine,
Masaccio.

. . . . . .

Look around
And know that where we stand stood oft and long,
Oft till the day was gone, Raphael himself;
Nor he alone, so great the ardour there,
Such while it reigned the generous rivalry;
He, and how many more, once thither drawn,
Anxious to learn of those who came before,
To steal a spark from their immortal fire
Who first did break the universal gloom,
Sons of the morning."[4]

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[1] One other fresco of his has in recent years been discovered on the entrance wall of Sta. Maria Novella, till now hidden under a painting by another artist, but it is in a much ruined state.

[2] It is recorded of Raphael that he copied these frescoes of Masaccio's no less than seven times.

[3] It was in this chapel that Michelangelo obtained his broken nose; insulting another artist, the latter knocked him down, breaking his nose.

[4] Rogers' *Italy*.

Giovanni di Bicci, in his readiness to befriend struggling artists, assisted the poor youth who was then so little known, and Masaccio introduced a portrait of him into his fresco picture of the consecration of the Carmine church in 1422, but this fresco was destroyed when the greater part of that church was burnt in 1721.

At some time during the year 1427 Masaccio ended his painting for the Carmelite community and went off to Rome, none know for what purpose (for of such an insignificant person nothing was at that time recorded), but presumably in order to obtain work; and there in the following year he died in poverty and obscurity, unknown to fame until after he was dead, when the world awoke to the knowledge of what a genius had been living in that obscure corner of Florence where he had worked.[1]

Giovanni died in 1428, at the age of sixty-eight, and at his death left an immense fortune to his two sons, Cosimo and Lorenzo. He died deservedly esteemed by his countrymen, beloved by the humbler classes of the people, who had so often found in him a defender and whose welfare he had consistently promoted, remembered with gratitude by all who, struggling to rise in some branch of Art, had never failed to receive from him a

Giovanni di Bicci. 1428.

[1] In recent years part of the work in the Brancacci chapel hitherto attributed to Masaccio has been thought to be by another artist, Masolino. But this, even if the case, makes no difference to Masaccio's fame, as sufficient of his work would still remain to maintain it. The share attributed to Masolino is denied by Cavalcaselle.

helping hand, and respected even by some amongst the *nobili* who, though always opposed by him, had never found him other than an honourable antagonist. Machiavelli, describing his character, says:—

"He never sought the honours of government, yet enjoyed them all. When holding high office he was courteous to all. Not a man of great eloquence, but of an extraordinary prudence."

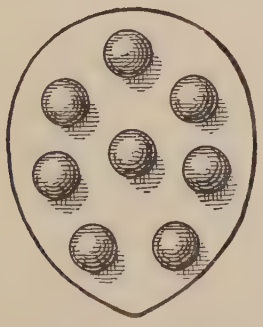
Giovanni had assisted at the birth of the movement in which Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, Donatello, and Masaccio were the leaders; he had helped its onward course, and he died as its "morning" ended with the death of Masaccio and began to pass into full noon. Thus the chief interest connected with his life will always be that memorable outburst in Art which took place between the years 1400 and 1428, burning with such ardour among the Florentines that it threw even politics into the background, and formed the prominent feature in the life of Florence during his time. He lies buried with Piccarda, his wife, in the "Old Sacristy,"[1] in the church of San Lorenzo, the only portion of the rebuilt church which was finished at the time of his death. Their fine tomb,[2] richly ornamented with figures of *putti* and garlands of flowers, stands in the centre of the sacristy with a large marble table over it. The tomb is interesting from the fact that isolated

[1] Called the "Old Sacristy" from the time when, nearly a hundred years later, the "New Sacristy" was built.

[2] Often said to be by Donatello, but, though much in his manner, it is considered by some critics not to be by him.—(Lord Balcarres.)

tombs like this, though common in other countries, were very rare in Italy.

Such was the founder of this family which was destined to have so momentous a history. He laid the foundations of the family solidly, not so much by the popularity which he won through his steadfast championship of the cause of the humbler classes, as by the principles of magnanimity, generosity, courtesy, and care for the people which he taught his sons, and caused to become an unwritten law in this family for three generations after him. As we look at the kindly and sensible old face in his portrait we feel how well it was for Florence in after years that Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici possessed the character that he did. It will be seen how, on his death, the party of the nobles took steps to destroy his work, as well as to prevent these "upstart Medici" from rising any higher.



The Medici arms in the time of Giovanni di Bicci (eight balls).

PART I

PART I

Giovanni di Bicci's two sons were Cosimo and Lorenzo. Cosimo's branch, which includes all the greater Medici, eventually in the seventh generation died out, when the succession passed to Lorenzo's branch, which carried on the family through six more generations, attained that crown which the elder branch had striven for and made possible, and at last in its turn also died out in 1743.[1]

As the best way of avoiding confusion the history follows the elder branch right down to its end (Part I.), before returning to take up (Part II.) the story of the younger branch, from its commencement with Lorenzo downwards. This is rendered the easier since the first few generations of the younger branch have scarcely any independent history of their own, theirs being almost entirely merged in that of the elder branch; so that the period when the younger branch has an independent history is a comparatively short one.

[1] *See* Genealogical Table (Appendix I.).

CHAPTER IV

COSIMO (PATER PATRIAE)

Born 1389. (*Ruled* 1434-1464.) *Died* 1464.

When Giovanni di Bicci died his eldest son Cosimo[1] was forty years old. Up to that time we have only one episode recorded of him, viz., that when in 1415 the Council of Constance was assembled and Pope John XXIII., forced by the Emperor Sigismund, very reluctantly proceeded to it, Cosimo de' Medici, then twenty-six years old, who had known him before he became Pope, went with him at the risk of his life to help to defend him; and had to fly in disguise when Pope John was deposed and imprisoned by the Council.

Cosimo had shortly before this adventure been married to Contessina de' Bardi;[2] and his eldest son, Piero, was born (apparently in the Bardi palace) while Cosimo was absent at the above Council. The Bardi were in the fourteenth century the richest banking family in Florence. Though they themselves have disappeared their oldest palace[3] still stands in the street which was all

[1] Plate III.

[2] Contessina was, of course, her Christian name, not a title. One of the daughters of Lorenzo the Magnificent had the same name.

[3] Now No. 21 Via de' Bardi.

once their property, and still bears their name, the Via de' Bardi, always to us reminiscent of "Romola." But they had fallen on evil days before Cosimo's marriage to the eldest daughter of the house, having been gradually ruined owing to the loss of a large sum of money which, lent by them to Edward III. of England, had never been repaid.[1] By this marriage the Bardi palace came into the possession of the Medici family, and Cosimo appears during his father's lifetime to have lived there, his arms (with eight red balls[2]) being still to be seen in some of the rooms.

Cosimo had been educated at the celebrated school attached to the Camaldolese monastery of Sta. Maria degli Angeli in the Via degli Alfani.[3] He knew Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Arabic, besides several modern languages, and was passionately fond of both Learning and Art. He also possessed all the qualities which distinguished his father, and on becoming head of the family soon showed that he would be likely to play a more prominent part in Florentine affairs than his father. The family were by this time growing enormously wealthy, owning banks in as many as sixteen capital cities in Europe;[4] and Cosimo's

[1] *See* p. 85 (footnote).

[2] In the Medici arms eight balls, all of them red, indicate the time of Giovanni di Bicci (*see* chap. vi. p. 185).

[3] This academy had been started in the fourteenth century for the study of Greek and Latin by the learned Neapolitan monk Ambrogio Traversari, afterwards Prior of the Order. Landino, Pucci, and many others afterwards famous in different branches of learning, were all educated with Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo at this academy.

[4] Besides other cities, Cosimo had banks at Paris, London, Bruges, Lyons, Venice, Genoa, Rome, and Naples.

great wealth, courteous demeanour, ability, and tact, all joined as it was to a generous disposition, made him fully as popular with the people as his father had been.

In Cosimo de' Medici the party of the nobles (the *Grandi*), then headed by the powerful family of the Albizzi, saw a formidable opponent. They already detested this wealthy family who were rising from the class of the *Popolani* and gaining such influence, and they saw in its new head one who aroused their bitterest jealousy. They therefore determined that the Medici must be entirely rooted out of Florence. This, however, was not easy to accomplish, Cosimo's popularity being so great; moreover, the most respected of their number, the aged Niccolò da Uzzano, was against any such design. Machiavelli tells us that when the other nobles consulted him regarding their proposed action against the Medici he warned them that in a trial of strength the latter would win; that if Cosimo were put to death as they desired, Florence would be in danger of having Rinaldo degli Albizzi as a despot, and that if either was to prevail, of the two he preferred Cosimo; "but," he added, "God deliver this city from private usurpation." So that for the present the nobles were forced to bide their time.

In 1430, two years after his father's death, Cosimo began to carry out a project which he had had under consideration from the time he succeeded his father, that of building a new palace for the family. For this he chose a site in the Via Larga,[1]

[1] Now the Via Cavour.

the widest street in the city, at the corner where it was joined by a short street, the Via de' Gori, which ran down to the church of San Lorenzo, then being rebuilt with the family money, and which when completed he purposed to endow.

This palace Cosimo intended should be a model of architectural art, and should surpass anything of the kind up to that time seen. Brunelleschi was now the foremost architect of the age; his dome was approaching completion, he was also building the church of San Lorenzo, and in this same year[1] began his other church of Santo Spirito. So Cosimo had at first proposed to employ him in designing his new palace. But on seeing Brunelleschi's plan he considered it too grand in character, and instead of it accepted a less pretentious one by Michelozzo, an architect then coming into notice, and who (chiefly through this work) became recognised as second only to Brunelleschi. For the adornment of the *cortile* of the palace, when it should be completed, Cosimo gave various commissions to Donatello, by this time acknowledged as the leading sculptor. These included the bronze statue of *David* (now in the museum of the Bargello), the bronze statue of *Judith slaying Holofernes* (now in the Loggia de' Lanzi) and the medallions copied from antique gems, still to be seen over the arches of the *cortile*.[2] The first of these works, the *David*, was an epoch-making statue in the history of Art, having probably a greater influence than any other single

[1] *See* chap. viii. p. 217 (footnote).
[2] Two of these are visible in Plate VI.

statue ever executed;[1] it was finished within the next three years (before Cosimo's exile[2]), the other commissions being completed later.

In 1432 Niccolò da Uzzano, for so many years the respected leader of the *nobili* (though latterly thrown into the shade by Rinaldo degli Albizzi), died. He was one of the best statesmen Florence had ever possessed, consistently employing his influence to check the party rivalries of his countrymen.[3]

His restraining influence being removed, the nobles proceeded to carry out their resolve to get rid of these Medici who were becoming such formidable champions of the people. Complete success in this object required, they considered, the death of Cosimo himself and the banishment of the rest of the family, including his brother Lorenzo and their first cousin Averardo; in the case of a family of bankers such a banishment, particularly if they were dispersed, would soon cause their ruin. With the Albizzi family at their head the *nobili* now took steps to effect these objects. And the new palace, so much superior to any hitherto built in Florence, assisted them in their design, now that the walls began to attain sufficient height for the general style of the building to be appreciated, and particularly the novel and expensive *rustica* style of the lower storey.

Having by a skilful manipulation of the elections of the year 1433 obtained a Signoria considerably under their influence, the Albizzi party

[1] *See* pp. 111-112. [2] Vasari.

[3] He lived in the palace in the Via de' Bardi which is now the Capponi palace. His daughter Ginevra married one of the Capponi family.

accused Cosimo to the Government of scheming to exalt himself above the rank of an ordinary citizen (the worst charge possible in Florence), and pointed among other things to the new palace as being too grand for a simple citizen, denoting an ambition dangerous to the Republic. Whereupon Cosimo was suddenly arrested, and consigned to a cell in the tower of the Palazzo della Signoria, while arrangements were made for his speedy judicial murder. But the temper of the populace when they heard what was going on became so formidable that that plan had after a day or two to be abandoned. The nobles then attempted to employ poison, and commissioned two of their number to effect this; Cosimo had from the first expected that this method would be employed, and for the first three days of his imprisonment would eat nothing; but this second plan also failed, as Cosimo's jailer, Federigo Malavolti, refused to be corrupted. So the nobles had to be content with his banishment; but Cosimo had a narrow escape. In due course a sentence of banishment was passed by the Signoria, a regular decree of ostracism, in the Greek style, being drawn up; the whole of the Medici were exiled, Cosimo and his family to Padua,[1] his brother Lorenzo to Venice, and his cousin Averardo to Naples; and they were escorted under a guard to the frontier. The decree declared that the Medici were banished from the city and state of Florence "being dangerous to the Republic by reason of their wealth and ambition." The sentence of exile, and the reasons for it, were published in all other states,

[1] He was subsequently permitted to move from Padua to Venice.

so as to make their disgrace as public as possible. And the nobles, though they had failed to secure Cosimo's death, were satisfied that they had nevertheless achieved the ruin of the Medici.

Thus were the Medici for the first time cast forth in ignominy by Florence as foes to her Republic. It was an experience they were to undergo three times in the course of their history. On this first occasion it occurred solely to satisfy the desire of the nobles to get rid of the one family that stood in the way of a return to that state of things wherein the power had been in the hands of the nobles, an object the latter had never ceased to work for since the reform of the constitution which had placed all power in the hands of the people. It is often asserted that the germs of an aim to destroy the Republic and erect a despotic monarchy in its place, existed in the Medici from the first. But so far, at all events, as this first banishment is concerned the statement is proved in the most practical manner to be untrue. For whereas suspicions of this nature when once aroused have, if there be any basis for them, a tendency to grow stronger in the absence of the accused (and certainly would do so in such a city), yet in this case the very reverse occurred; and Florence by her action a year afterwards conclusively proved that there were no grounds for the charge.

By Cosimo's exile the work on the Medici Palace was brought to a standstill, and as neither Michelozzo nor Donatello desired to remain in a city which had cast him out they also went into exile, Michelozzo accompanying Cosimo and

Donatello proceeding to Rome[1] to study such remains of the classic sculpture as were to be found there, though these were at that time extremely few,[2] the Popes not having begun to collect such things, and all the treasures now to be seen in the sculpture galleries of the Vatican and the Capitol then lying buried under the ruins of the devastated city.

Contemporary historical events. 1428-1433.

The chief events during the first five years after Cosimo became head of the family were the great change which at this time came over the long struggle between France and England (known as the "Hundred Years' War"), and the assembly of the Council of Bâle, the third of the attempts of the fifteenth century to reform the Church. Also, on a smaller stage, Florence's two wars, against Lucca and against Milan.

Regarding the first of the above events, it has been noted how in 1428 the English, then masters of all northern France, advanced southwards and laid siege to Orleans. Then came Joan of Arc, and in three years (1428-1431) changed the whole aspect of affairs in France. The details of her career, ending in a death which was to the lasting disgrace of both English and French, are well known. The English power in France never recovered the blow dealt it by her

[1] Some have held that this was Donatello's second visit to Rome, and that he had accompanied Brunelleschi thither in 1403; but this is not believed by most modern critics (*see* M. Raymond's *La Scultura Fiorentina*).

[2] Poggio, writing at this time about the ruins of Rome, speaks of a statue with a head as though that were something quite extraordinary.

victories, and from this time forth the English were steadily driven backwards.

In 1431, the same year that Joan of Arc was burnt at Rouen, the Council of Bâle was assembled. In that year Martin V., the Pope who had been elected at the Council of Constance, died. He had revived the autocratic view of the Papacy which had been maintained by the Popes of the thirteenth century, had ruled that archbishops and bishops are merely the delegates of the Pope, and had endeavoured to prevent all further assembling of councils to reform the Church by ruling that Popes were superior to councils. It was a strange outcome of the work of such a Council as that of Constance. However, on his death his rulings were ignored, and a third attempt to reform the Church was made by the assembly of the Council of Bâle. It was convened (like that of Constance) by the Emperor Sigismund. The new Pope, Eugenius IV., having failed in his endeavour to prevent its meeting, or to get it dissolved as soon as the preliminary proceedings were concluded, was, through fear of being deposed, at length forced to acknowledge that a Pope is subject to a council, and sent four cardinals to represent him at it. This Council was sitting at Bâle from 1431 to 1438. It passed various decrees of reform which the Pope accepted; then as it proceeded to deal stronger blows at the Papacy the Pope tried to remove it to Italy. The Council, however, refused to be removed. Its subsequent dealings with Pope Eugenius IV. will be noted hereafter.

During the years 1429 to 1433 Florence was

dragged into two small wars which brought her much discredit. The Albizzi, wielding the chief influence, first persuaded the Government to enter on an unjust aggressive war against Lucca, and then prosecuted this war with such an utter want of ability that it was no wonder that it was completely unsuccessful; and Florence in this attempt to conquer Lucca reaped nothing but expense, failure, and loss of prestige. This war produced one with Milan, which languished on undecisively until 1433, when a temporary peace was patched up. These two wars, whose only result was an increased expenditure, brought much disfavour upon the Albizzi, who were entirely responsible for them.

Cosimo. 1434. The first exile of the Medici lasted only for one year. The large majority of the population loved this munificent and gracious family, and by the time a year had passed saw that they had been made a catspaw to assist the manœuvres of the nobles, and that while there was no ground for the accusation against the Medici, there was every ground for suspecting the motive of the nobles. For the Albizzi and their party, when once they had got rid of the people's main supporter, proceeded, by their scarcely concealed plotting against that democratic form of government which Florence had gained through so many struggles, to give the people good reason for such fears. So in September 1434 the decree of banishment against the Medici was annulled, and messages were sent inviting their return. The

Albizzi thereupon flew to arms, assembled their adherents to the number of about eight hundred, and made an attempt to seize the Government before Cosimo should return; but the Signoria obtained troops from Pistoia, and the attempt failed. On the 6th October Cosimo re-entered Florence with a public triumph almost like that given to a conqueror, and in the midst of a rejoicing populace. Machiavelli says:—"Seldom has a citizen returning from a great victory been greeted by such a concourse of people, and with such demonstrations of affection, as was Cosimo on his return from exile." And Cosimo's unassuming demeanour, even on the occasion of so honourable a triumph over his enemies, increased still further his popularity.

His subsequent conduct did him equal honour. In any other state in Europe at that time of the world's history such a return to power would assuredly have been followed by the putting to death of those whose enmity had caused what had been endured. Cosimo and his whole family had been treated with the bitterest animosity by the nobles, and with the greatest ingratitude by those members of the Signoria whom the nobles had induced to do their will; the humiliation of himself and his family had been made known in all the surrounding states; they had been put to much fear, inconvenience, and loss; his own life had been attempted, and nothing had been omitted to secure the total ruin of his family. Yet, when thus triumphantly brought back by the will of the people with ample power to retaliate, we find Cosimo firmly refusing to

allow any of those who had caused these things to be put to death. On the other hand, that some should suffer banishment on account, not of what had been done to the Medici, but of the attempt which had been made, before their return, to overthrow the Government, was inevitable; the Albizzi and their party could not expect to get off unpunished after such an endeavour. Those writers who are anxious to find cause against the Medici have accused Cosimo of a "vindictive policy" on this occasion; but this is unjust. The Signoria, terribly frightened at the attempt (which had nearly succeeded) of the Albizzi and their party to seize the Government by force of arms, passed a sentence of exile against some eighty of them.[1] It was not an unnatural result of their conduct. But in any case there is no evidence that this and other repressive measures against the Albizzi party, some of which measures had been already taken before his arrival, were instigated by Cosimo at all.[2]

A few months after the above triumphant return Cosimo received from his city the most practical demonstration it could give of its entire

[1] Machiavelli informs us that the most eminent of these were Rinaldo degli Albizzi, Ridolfo Peruzzi, Palla Strozzi, Niccolò Barbadori, and members of the Guicciardini, Guadagni, Uzzani, and Gianni families.

[2] That Cosimo, when subsequently he gained complete power, did not annul this banishment of the Albizzi and their adherents was surely natural enough. To have allowed them to return would only have again plunged Florence into that faction—fighting which had ever been the chief obstacle to her welfare. An exception might apparently have been made in the case of the noble-hearted Palla Strozzi; but it is possible that Cosimo knew more on that point than we do, and may have known that however peaceable a man Palla Strozzi himself was, he would inevitably become a cause of such disturbances. Palla Strozzi retired to Padua, and remained there for the rest of his life, dying in 1464 at the age of ninety-two.

revulsion of sentiment towards him, and regret for the treatment which he and his had received. He was elected Gonfaloniere, and held that office for the next two months.

Contemporary historical events. 1433-1434.

Meanwhile Pope Eugenius IV. had become involved in many troubles, mainly through his continued opposition to the Council of Bâle. The Emperor Sigismund at length being determined to force the Pope to submit to the reforms which the Council was striving to pass, but which the Pope's delegates were obstructing, proceeded to Italy, being invited thither by Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan, who hoped that the Emperor would assist him in the war he was then carrying on against Florence and Venice. After staying for some time with the Duke of Milan, and after being crowned with the iron crown of Lombardy, the Emperor, avoiding Florence's territory, proceeded by way of Lucca and Siena to Rome, where he was crowned by Pope Eugenius in St Peter's (1433). Thence he started on his way back to Bâle, apparently less ready than he had hitherto been to support the Council against the Pope. But immediately afterwards Fortebraccio, commander of the Milanese troops, marched upon Rome, while at the same time Francesco Sforza, also in behalf of the Duke of Milan, seized a large part of the Papal territories in Romagna, declaring that he was authorised to do so by the Council of Bâle. The eventual result was that Pope Eugenius was, in 1434, forced to fly from Rome in disguise and in danger of his

life, the people of Rome joining with his other foes in expelling him. He took refuge at Florence, arriving there just at the time of Cosimo's recall from exile. And at Florence this Pope resided for the next eight years, while Rome remained in possession of his enemies.

Cosimo. 1434-1439.

Cosimo at the time of his recall from banishment in 1434 was forty-five years of age, and thenceforth became the acknowledged leading citizen of the Florentine Republic. But knowing well the fickle nature of popular favour and the peculiar temperament of his countrymen—their habit of constant change, their tendency to fall a prey to one faction after another, and above all their jealousy of any individual who seemed inclined to exalt himself—he saw that an immense task lay before him if he was to retain that position.

It has generally been assumed that Cosimo was actuated solely by personal ambition; but he had other motives than this. Apart from all question of personal or family ambition, he desired to retain that position for two reasons eminently honourable to him. The poorer classes were ground down under a crushing burden of taxation, due to the heavy cost to each individual citizen of wars so constantly undertaken by a state whose population was comparatively small. This evil he desired to remedy by so guiding foreign affairs as to make such wars less frequent. Again he saw that the same cause was severely hampering Florence's commerce, while as a banker on a wide scale he

felt that if he could create peace, he would be able considerably to extend Florentine markets and increase the commercial wealth of the Florentines. Feeling that he possessed in himself the ability to do these things, it was in every way natural that he should wish to show that he could do them. Ambition of this kind is not a fault, but a virtue.[1]

But to do all this he must be Florence's leading citizen, no matter who might from time to time be Gonfaloniere. And in order to retain permanently this position—one which could never be more than tacitly granted—two things would be necessary: first, to make all foreign countries recognise that he, and he alone, was the motive power in the Florentine state; and, second, to convince his own countrymen that no one else could so satisfactorily manage their affairs, and in particular their foreign affairs, so that they should be glad to leave all such matters in his hands. And both these things must be done in such a way as never to arouse in the Florentines that peculiar jealousy of any kind of authority which they were so apt to develop. Such was the task before Cosimo, one at which any man might have quailed, in view of the temperament of the Florentine people of his time, as well as the conditions of perpetual intrigue in the midst of which it must be carried out. Yet, as will be seen in the sequel, he accomplished with complete success this difficult task.

But it was not only in the political sphere that Cosimo won renown. Many and varied were the

[1] It has been said:—"All men and women who are of any use to the world in which they live are ambitious."

matters which he took in hand for the advancement of Learning, the encouragement of Art, and the assistance of charitable institutions. Before all else he was a deep scholar; one of those who loved learning for its own sake. He maintained a regular staff of agents always employed in searching in the East for rare and important manuscripts,[1] which became the nucleus of the great library which he founded; he instituted the celebrated Platonic Academy for the study of the rediscovered Plato, of whose writings he was an enthusiastic admirer; no scholar applied to him in vain, and the ways in which he promoted the cause of Learning were numberless. Gibbon says of him:—

"Cosimo was the father of a line of princes whose name and age are almost synonymous with the restoration of Learning. His credit was ennobled into fame; his riches were dedicated to the service of mankind; he corresponded at once with Cairo and London; and a cargo of Indian spices and Greek books were often imported in the same vessel."

To Art he gave similar assistance; he was a liberal patron to the painters Fra Angelico and Lippi, to the sculptors Ghiberti and Donatello, and to the architects Brunelleschi and Michelozzo; he collected objects of art of every kind; and he made his collections open to all artists. No less lavish were his charities; he gave large sums for the rebuilding of many churches and monasteries,

[1] It demonstrates both the aim which was in view in these costly searchings for ancient documents, and the spirit in which they were undertaken, when we find Cyriac of Ancona, in starting for the East on one of these quests, saying, "I go to awake the dead."

including the Badia of Fiesole, the monastery of San Marco, and the church of San Lorenzo, built a hospital at Jerusalem for sick and infirm pilgrims, and bore a large part in every charitable work undertaken in Florence. Such was the man who in 1434 became the leading citizen of the Florentine Republic, and set forth on the political task which has been mentioned.

In 1435 Francesco Sforza, the celebrated *condottiere* commander, visited Florence. During this visit he developed a great liking for Cosimo, and thus began that friendship between them which in after years had important political results.

In 1436 Brunelleschi completed his dome, and the cathedral,[1] begun a hundred and thirty-eight years before by Arnolfo di Cambio, was at last finished.

This completion of the great work upon which four generations had laboured was a notable event, and a ceremony worthy of the occasion was arranged. Pope Eugenius IV. was at this time residing at the monastery of Santa Maria Novella, and the cathedral was solemnly consecrated by him on the Feast of the Annunciation, 25th March 1436. "A raised passage, richly carpeted and decorated with tapestry, damask, silk, and flowers, was constructed from the door of Santa Maria Novella, and passing through the Baptistery, to the western door of the cathedral." Along this an imposing procession, consisting of the Pope, thirty-seven bishops, seven cardinals, the Signoria, and the envoys of foreign powers, passed from

[1] Always in Florence called the "Duomo."

Sta. Maria Novella to the cathedral. The consecration ceremony occupied five hours, after which the procession was re-formed and returned in the same way. A tablet on the wall of the cathedral commemorates this event. Brunelleschi, more fortunate than Giotto,[1] lived to see the completion of his great work and to take part in the above ceremony. The completion of the dome and the consecration of the cathedral serve to mark the beginning of Cosimo's rule in Florence.

In 1437 Cosimo set about rebuilding at his own expense the afterwards far-famed monastery of San Marco in Florence. This monastery of the Dominican Order had at this time in its community two men who will ever live enshrined in the memory of men as representing all that was best in the spirit of that age, and as counterbalancing much that was evil, Giovanni of Fiesole, called Fra Angelico, and Antonio Pierozzi, called Antonino, afterwards Archbishop of Florence.

Situated near the new palace which he was building, its Prior a man so justly beloved,[2] this monastery seems to have been looked upon by Cosimo as a well-beloved retreat to which he could retire for rest and congenial companionship when harassed by the cares of State and the vexations of political life. And with his usual liberality in all that he undertook he spent money upon it "with a generosity which the modesty of the friars

[1] The campanile ("Giotto's tower") was not completed until fifty years after Giotto's death.

[2] Antonio Pierozzi, better known to us as St Antonino, was, on account of the various qualities which he showed as Prior of San Marco, made Archbishop of Florence by Pope Eugenius IV. in 1445. His statue is the only one of an ecclesiastic which has been placed among those in the Uffizi colonnade.

had to restrain." The rebuilding of it cost him 36,000 ducats, in addition to which sum he gave it a large endowment. He had a special cell set apart for his own use, and thither often resorted for converse with the Prior and others of the community; he gave as a nucleus for the monastery library over four hundred valuable manuscript books; and it was at his expense that the walls of the monastery were decorated with those frescoes by Fra Angelico which all the world now visits San Marco to see.

Art. 1434-1439.

The effect of having at the head of the State a man like Cosimo showed itself at once in the impetus given to all branches of Art. As a result we find Art taking great strides during these first five years of Cosimo's supremacy in Florentine affairs, and artists at work all over the city whose names have since become famous throughout the world. Ghiberti was employed on his second pair of bronze doors; Brunelleschi was engaged on his two churches of San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito,[1] besides several palaces; Michelozzo was at work on the Medici Palace and the monastery of San Marco; Donatello, having returned from Rome, was busy in San Lorenzo and on his various works for Cosimo's new palace; the dead Masaccio's name was earning great fame, for by this time men had recognised his genius, and all painters were eagerly studying his works in the Brancacci chapel; Luca della Robbia was completing his marble screen of the

[1] The church of Santo Spirito was built by the parishioners of that quarter of the city, the four chief families who paid for it being the Frescobaldi, the Capponi, the Ridolfi, and the Corbinelli.

Cantoria; Fra Angelico was beginning his frescoes in San Marco; Lippi was painting pictures for Cosimo, in which he was to show the world the lessons which Masaccio had taught; Andrea del Castagno, Domenico Veneziano, Paolo Uccello, and many other artists were at work in Florence, most of them brought thither directly by Cosimo to execute various works for him, while he was besieged with letters by others at a distance importuning him for commissions.

Contemporary historical events. 1434-1439.

From 1434 to 1436 Florence was again at war with Milan, Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan, being stirred up to attack Florence's territory by the banished Rinaldo degli Albizzi and his party, "who urged the Duke to make war on Florence, promising to aid him with a contingent of *fuorusciti*, and by fomenting insurrection within the city." At length, however, in February 1437, Florence gained a victory over the forces of Milan at the battle of Barga, which for a time put a stop to Milan's efforts; whereupon Florence again attacked Lucca, but without any success. Milan, however, renewed the war in 1438, and it dragged on, with varying success, for several years, without definite result.

In the year 1437 the Emperor Sigismund died; and immediately upon this Pope Eugenius IV. came to an open breach with the Council of Bâle, and summoned a fresh council to meet in Italy, the place chosen being Ferrara. Its main object was to consider proposals made at this time by the Eastern Emperor. The Emperor John Paleologus,

following the example of his father and grandfather, proposed making a personal visit to the West to solicit help against the Turks to save Constantinople, which must otherwise fall. The Pope invited him, together with the Patriarch and bishops of the Eastern Church, to a conference, holding out hopes of such aid if the breach between the Churches of the East and the West could be healed.

Upon this action on the Pope's part of convening on his own authority a fresh council to meet in Italy (a step he had never been permitted to effect so long as the Emperor Sigismund lived), the Council of Bâle, refusing to be thus broken up, declared Pope Eugenius deposed. But the feeling of Europe was against the creation of another schism, and by degrees the Council of Bâle dwindled away and came to an end, after having sat for eight years and effected practically nothing towards that reformation of the Church for which it had been assembled. Thus again did the last reforming Council—for it was the last — fail as completely as the two which had preceded it.

Meanwhile the Emperor John Paleologus and his retinue, together with the Patriarch of Constantinople, Joseph, and a numerous body of bishops and theologians, sailed from Constantinople, and in due time arrived at Venice. The Emperor was received with great pomp by Doge Francesco Foscari, and entertained at Venice for a month; after which he proceeded to Ferrara, where Pope Eugenius having also arrived, the Council began its sittings (5th January 1438).

Cosimo, in that task which has been mentioned of gradually bringing foreign nations to recognise in him the motive power of the Florentine state, and also gradually convincing his countrymen that their interests were best served by leaving foreign affairs to him, had had to exercise much patience. He had a matter to effect which necessarily moved but slowly, and during the first few years he had been forced to be content with a very partial control, and often been obliged to acquiesce in action which he was as yet without the power to direct as he would wish. But by the end of the year 1438 he was beginning to have this power, foreign affairs being more and more left to him to manage in his own way. And he now took the first independent step, one which had very important results to Florence. He proceeded to Ferrara, where the Council between the Eastern and Western Churches had been sitting for nearly a year, and so used his influence with Pope Eugenius IV. that he got the Council transferred to Florence; whereby he obtained for his city increased political influence, brought to it much added trade, and secured for it additional advantages in the advancement of the cause of Learning. Accordingly the Council removed in February 1439 from Ferrara to Florence, which thus became the centre of interest in this great historical event.

The Council of Florence. 1439.

This Council is one of the most interesting assemblages of this kind that ever took place. A gathering which included an Emperor of the East and his retinue, a Patriarch of Constantinople, the principal

authorities of the Eastern Church, a Pope of Rome, the principal authorities of the Western Church, and all the most learned men of both East and West, had never before been seen. Moreover, it was the last occasion on which such an assemblage was possible; fourteen years later the fall of Constantinople swept away all that formed its peculiar interest, making it impossible for such a gathering ever to occur again.

This occasion gave Cosimo a great opportunity, both in the political sphere and with regard to the cause of learning. Nor did he allow the cost of entertaining these distinguished visitors to fall upon the State, but made them all his own guests, an action which gained him universal commendation. Residences were provided for them such as they could not have obtained in any other city. The Patriarch of Constantinople was lodged in the Ferrantini palace in the Borgo Pinti; the Pope and his suite in the extensive range of buildings at that time attached to Sta. Maria Novella; while to the Emperor and his retinue were given the whole of the Peruzzi palaces[1] then surrounding the Piazza de' Peruzzi, a group of palaces in which the Eastern Emperor and his suite were more splendidly lodged than they could have been in the dwelling of any prince in Europe. The Council began its sittings on the 2nd March. It sat in the cathedral, beneath Brunelleschi's

[1] The Peruzzi were another great banking family, who, with the Bardi, were ruined by Edward III. (*see* p. 64). These two families lent him a large sum of money with which to fight the battle of Crecy; Professor Villari says that the sum thus lent to Edward III.—and the loss of which, by his never repaying the debt, ruined these two families — was 1,365,000 gold florins, equal in our present money to nearly £7,000,000 sterling.

glorious dome, at that time the wonder of Italy, and worthy to be first used on so unique an occasion.

This gathering gave an immense impetus to what was beginning to be called the "New Learning." It brought to Florence the most learned churchmen of Eastern Christendom, such as Bessarion, Bishop of Nicæa, and also the most learned scholars of the East, such as Gemistos Plethon, whom Cosimo induced to settle permanently at Florence; it brought many rare manuscripts, most of which found their way into Cosimo's library; and, above all, it created personal contact and friendliness, destined to have large results when a few years later this Greek learning should find itself driven from its home in Constantinople. The effect of all this was to advance Florence still further on that path of unearthing the long-buried literature of the past on which Cosimo's efforts had already been long engaged.

And this "New Learning," among many results which it was to have in the future, was to have one result of which men little dreamed, and least of all those most occupied in fostering the cause of learning. For it was destined in time to produce that great convulsion extending over all Europe which we know as the Reformation.[1]

The "New Learning" operated in two different ways to produce this result. First, in its work of increasing a knowledge of the ancient literature

[1] The effect of the "New Learning" in producing the Reformation has not generally been recognised to the full extent that it deserves (*see* chap. xiii. pp. 419-421).

it opened up large tracts of history till then scarcely known. It made scholars acquainted with writings belonging to the centuries preceding the dark period before the time of Charlemagne, writings hitherto accessible, if at all, only to ecclesiastics, and able to be read only by a few even of the latter. A large number of these writings referred to Church matters, and had been written by eminent bishops of that period.[1] And these soon disclosed to scholars that during at least six centuries of the Church's earliest life its constitution had been very different from what they now saw it, and with no supremacy of one See over all others; while such writings also made them acquainted with the proceedings of the six great General Councils of the Church which had taken place in those centuries, some of which Councils had given decisions bearing on this very point.

And to this new knowledge of the history of the Church the gathering in Florence added considerably. For it enabled the dignitaries of the Eastern Church to converse face to face, and in their own language, with enquirers on such subjects belonging to the West. And since the Eastern Church prided itself on never deviating by one hair's-breadth from what was held at the beginning, and since the special point upon which the discussions of the Council were taking place was this very one of the claim of the Church of Rome to a supremacy which the Eastern Church

[1] The earliest of these "Fathers of the Church" of course all wrote in Greek; Tertullian (third century) was the first of them who wrote in Latin.

maintained did not exist at the beginning, the Eastern bishops and theologians gathered at Florence would be certain to corroborate any discoveries on the above point which the "New Learning" might reveal to the eager scholars of Florence. And what scholars learnt in one generation all mankind would, through them, learn in the next.

Pope Eugenius, therefore, in bringing the bishops[1] and theologians of the Eastern Church into contact with the hotbed of learning which was growing up in Florence, had done the most fatal thing he could to the cause of the Papacy. Moreover, the time was soon to come when one of these scholars of the Renaissance, poring in some dim library over the documents of the eighth century, would make the amazing discovery that the so-called *Donation of Constantine*, and the celebrated *Decretals* (now known as *The Forged Decretals*), upon which the whole claim of the See of Rome to a supremacy had been based, were nothing less than a series of immense forgeries. As the general result of all this the "New Learning," which now received so strong an impetus, was bound, as soon as it should spread to Germany and England, and as soon as the invention of printing should come to aid it in doing so, to produce the Reformation. The process would take time, but the effect was certain. Where the Councils of Pisa, Constance, and Bâle had failed, the "New Learning" would assuredly

[1] The number of the Eastern bishops was twenty-three; all except one were Metropolitans of important provinces; they were accompanied by a large number of theologians and other learned men.

not fail. It was a train of gunpowder laid, in an ever-widening circle, from Florence as a centre; though the man was not yet born whose hand would, eighty years later, far away in Germany, eventually set fire to the train.

The second way in which the "New Learning" tended to the same result was of a different kind. It gave a strong impulse towards the study of Plato and other non-Christian thinkers of the classical age, and a tendency to look at all religions from their standpoint. And here also this gathering in Florence had much effect. We are told that Cosimo, always a great admirer of Plato's philosophy, formed the idea of his celebrated Platonic Academy from conversing with the Greek scholar Plethon, the most learned of the Greeks who came to the Council. This famous Academy became the home of the richest intellectual life of the century, and though many of its members made endeavours to reconcile Platonism and Christianity, its general tendency was against the existing order of things in religion. Its influence became later on very widespread, and Symonds says that it would be impossible to over-estimate the influence upon European thought which this Platonic Academy came to exercise about the time of the Reformation—in Italy through Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, and in Germany through Reuchlin and his pupil Melanchthon.[1]

This great gathering of 1439 in Florence had its effect also on Art. We are often inclined to wonder where such painters as Fra Angelico, Benozzo Gozzoli, and Gentile da Fabriano got

[1] Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy.*

the idea of the gorgeous robes and strange-looking head-dresses which we see in their pictures of Eastern subjects. It was all taken direct from the life of Florence of this year. During that summer the inhabitants of Florence saw a perpetual succession of grand processions and imposing functions in which these visitors from the East appeared in every kind of magnificent and strange costume. Vespasiano da Bisticci and other writers of the time dilate upon their rich silken robes, heavy with gold, and their fantastic-looking head-dresses, regarded with deep interest by the learned on account of their ancient character. And the painters reproduce these before us in pictorial records which are valuable to us on that very account, and because this was the last occasion on which these costumes were destined to appear.

As regards the objects with which the Council of Florence was assembled, no results followed. The venerable Patriarch of Constantinople, Joseph, died in Florence one month before the Council came to an end.[1] After his death an agreement between the Greek and Latin Churches was made by the Council and published with much ostentation by the Pope.[2] But the basis of it was that submission of the Eastern Church to the Church of Rome which had been an aim of the Papacy ever since the tenth century; and the failure of any agreement from that standpoint was a foregone

[1] The Council closed its sittings on the 6th July.

[2] This interesting document is still preserved in the Medici Library (now called the Laurentian Library), with the original signatures, including those of the Emperor and the Pope.

conclusion. The Emperor on the termination of the Council returned at once to Constantinople, and as soon as the terms of the agreement he had made became known, it was violently repudiated by the entire population, and a tumult so great arose that the agreement made at Florence was forthwith dropped and never heard of again.[1] Thus the Emperor John Paleologus, the third in succession to strive to get help from the West to save Constantinople, was no more successful than his father and grandfather had been. It was evidently vain to hope that the nations of Europe could be induced to lay aside their mutual dissensions even to protect themselves from a danger which threatened them all, and the days of the great capital of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire, which had blocked the path of Mahomedan conquest for eight hundred years, were now plainly numbered.

Cosimo. 1440-1452

In 1440, shortly after the above concourse had dispersed and Florence had returned to her normal conditions, the palace in the Via Larga which Cosimo had begun to build in 1430 was sufficiently completed for occupation, and he moved into it. The members of the family who were thus the first to take up their abode in this palace to which so much of the after history of the Medici attaches, were Cosimo and his wife,

[1] A marble tablet recording this agreement may be seen on the wall of the choir of the cathedral. It was, however, null and void from the first.

Contessina, and their two sons, Piero and Giovanni, then respectively twenty-four and nineteen years old. A few years later both the latter were to marry and bring their wives also to live in the family palace, which, before Cosimo's death, echoed to the childish voices of yet a third generation. Cosimo's brother Lorenzo died just as this change of residence of the elder branch took place.

In the same year the long and desultory war with Milan was brought to a conclusion. The Milanese army, under Piccinino, after threatening Florence, retired into the Casentino, where, being followed by the Florentine army, it was defeated at the battle of Anghiari, by which success Florence gained the fertile district of the Casentino, and Venice, her ally, gained Peschiera and Bergamo.

In the following year (1441) there occurred an incident out of which has originated an accusation against Cosimo of the gravest kind — to the effect that he instigated the murder of Baldaccio d'Anghiari, commander of the Florentine infantry. The crime was an atrocious one, but there is not a particle of evidence that Cosimo had anything to do with it. During the war with Milan in 1440 a Florentine named Orlandini was in command of the troops which had been stationed to hold the important pass of Marradi, on the Faenza road, a strong position covering Florence on the north, and between which and Florence there were no other troops. The Milanese army, under Piccinino, having failed in their attack on the pass of San Benedetto, then attempted to force that of Marradi, where they should have been still

more easily repulsed. But on the approach of the enemy Orlandini had ignominiously fled, ordering his troops to do the same, thereby leaving the road to Florence open to the enemy, who advanced and occupied the heights of Fiesole, placing Florence for a short time in great danger. And Baldaccio d'Anghiari being a brave soldier, had boldly denounced Orlandini's cowardice which had had such serious results. In 1441 Orlandini became Gonfaloniere, and while holding that office sent for Baldaccio, "under the garb of friendship," to come and discuss some military affairs at the Palazzo della Signoria. The latter accordingly went to the palace, was received by the Gonfaloniere with every sign of friendship, and conducted by him to his own room, where, on a sudden, hired assassins, placed in concealment by Orlandini, rushed upon Baldaccio and killed him, throwing his body into the *cortile* below. His head was cut off and his mangled remains exposed to the public in the Piazza della Signoria, where it was proclaimed that he had been put to death by the Signoria as a traitor to the Republic.

The accusation against Cosimo is that Baldaccio on his way to the palace happened to meet him, and asked his advice about going, and that Cosimo treacherously advised him to go: it being declared that Cosimo desired Baldaccio's death because he feared the growing influence of Neri Capponi, whose close friend Baldaccio was. The motive alleged is exceedingly lame, while the whole story of Baldaccio's having met Cosimo at all or received any advice from him is apparently due solely to

political animosity. It is only mentioned by one historian of the time, Cavalcanti, whose hatred of Cosimo is well known.[1] And as the story is not mentioned by any other writer, and comes from a source so unreliable in this particular case, it is now rejected by all historians as unworthy of credence. Gino Capponi in similarly rejecting it says that Cavalcanti "always writes in hatred of Cosimo, while wishing to appear not to do so."[2] Some writers have urged that even if Cosimo did not instigate the crime he must be held no less responsible, since he took no action against those guilty of it. But this ignores the fact that the latter were not private individuals, but the government of the country; that at the date when this occurred (1441) Cosimo had by no means yet gained the degree of power he afterwards attained; and that any action by him against the Signoria under the circumstances would have been at any rate highly unconstitutional, and would practically have been to head a rebellion against the constituted authority of the State. Lastly, the crime is so opposed to the whole tenor of his life that we are justified in rejecting absolutely the idea that he had any part in it, especially as the charge is entirely unsupported by any evidence.[3] Nor except for the desire to find material for a damning charge

[1] Giovanni Cavalcanti, an anti-Medicean, wrote a history of his time (1420-1455), which has been the chief mine whence statements against Cosimo have been drawn.

[2] Gino Capponi, ii. 277.

[3] Who, for instance, related what passed at this chance meeting in the street? Cosimo is not likely to have done so, and Baldaccio had not time to do so.

against Cosimo does the crime appear to differ from many others common at that time. The facts of the case are amply sufficient to account for Orlandini's deed; while he probably had reason to know that the members of the Signoria were not men likely to refuse to support his action before the people, backed as that action was by the evidence of traitorous conduct which he asserted that he possessed against Baldaccio d'Anghiari.

In the same year (1441) Cosimo arranged the purchase by Florence from the Pope of the town of Borgo San Sepolcro, for a sum of 25,000 florins; while we are told, "Cosimo increased the obligation of the State to him in the matter in that he himself advanced the purchase money."

In 1443 Pope Eugenius IV. was at last able to return to Rome. Rome was at this time a ruined city,[1] devastated by the long conflicts between the Orsini, the Colonna, and other great barons, and destitute of all culture or civilising influences; and the contrast was all the more severe to the Pope since Florence, where he had been living for eight years, was in advance of all other cities in Europe.

The Medici Library.

In 1444 Cosimo founded the celebrated Medici Library, the first public library[2] to exist in Europe, and from the example of which the Vatican Library at Rome was thirty years afterwards formed. This library, housed at first in their own palace, was steadily added to by the Medici family in succeeding generations, and

[1] Alberti, writing seven years later, declares that he had seen there twelve hundred churches in ruins.

[2] Cosimo's library was open to all scholars.

by them in 1524 the building in which it is now located (in the cloisters of San Lorenzo)[1] was constructed, designed by Michelangelo. It contains about ten thousand manuscript books of Greek and Latin classical authors, many of them of the rarest value. Among these it possesses the original copy of the Pandects of Justinian (A.D. 533), the discovery of which in the twelfth century caused so great an influence on the civilisation of Europe, and on which our study of the Roman law almost entirely hinges.[2] Also the best manuscript of Cicero's letters; two manuscripts of Tacitus, one of them being the sole existing copy containing the first five books of the "Annals"; a very ancient copy of the tragedies of Sophocles; a most important manuscript of Æschylus; a Greek treatise on surgery; the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar; a Virgil of the fourth century; a Syriac Gospel

[1] It is now called the Library of San Lorenzo, or the Laurentian Library. But it would be well done to cause it to revert to its own proper name, seeing that both the building itself and nearly all the treasures it contains were provided by this family.

[2] This original copy of the Pandects of Justinian is practically priceless in value. It is considered to be probably the sole authentic source from which all other remaining copies of the Roman law have been taken. It is said to have been discovered by the Pisans at Amalfi, when the fleet of Pisa captured that town in 1137. It was captured by the Florentine army from the Pisans when Pisa was taken in 1406, was considered by the Florentines their greatest treasure, and was closely guarded in the Palazzo della Signoria. Pope Leo X., in his desire to collect everything of that kind at Rome, carried it off thither in the year 1516, but after remaining there for about two hundred and seventy years it was restored to its proper home in Florence. The Emperor Justinian, when completing it, ordered that a list of names of the authors consulted in drawing up this code of the Roman law, and of their works, should be prefixed by Tribonian (his minister who had helped him in this great work) to the Pandects; and this list being found at the beginning of the Florentine manuscript is called the Florentine Index. The rich binding which this valuable book originally had was, after the Medici had passed away, stripped off by the Austrian Grand Duke of Tuscany, Pietro Leopoldo, and sold to the mint for "thirty gold deniers."

of A.D. 556; the Bible copied from 690 to 716 by Ceolfrid, Abbot of Wearmouth, and called the Codex Amiatinus; a Pliny of the tenth century; and numerous literary treasures connected with the time of Dante and Petrarch and the Florence of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; the whole representing a vast sum of money spent by the Medici on this splendid contribution towards the advancement of Learning. It is the parent of all the great libraries of Europe, and as such deserves to be duly honoured.[1]

In connection with this library it is curious to note how little printing, when, six years after this, it appeared, was at first welcomed. "Those who owned these rare and costly manuscripts of the past, with their beautiful caligraphy, looked with no favour on crude and ugly reproductions thereof by a mechanical process." It is recorded by Gregorovius that Federigo Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino (a prince who was at this time beginning to follow Cosimo's example in regard to the encouragement of Learning and Art) would not have a printed book in his library.

In 1446 a general war broke out in Italy. As usual, Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan, was its leading spirit, and he had as his allies the Pope and the King of Naples. Against this powerful coalition were ranged Venice, Florence, Genoa, and Bologna. The latter were entirely successful, especially when Cosimo at length managed to separate Naples

[1] This library was paid for twice over by the Medici. Confiscated by the Signoria when the family were banished in 1494, it was repurchased twenty years afterwards by Leo X., was transported by him to Rome, and was again returned to Florence by Clement VII.

from the coalition, and this brought about peace.

In the same year Brunelleschi died.[1] Grand funeral obsequies were held in the Duomo, where his body lay surrounded by candles beneath the mighty vault that he had constructed, and was visited by the whole city. He was buried in the Duomo, his monument being placed opposite that of Arnolfo di Cambio, he who began and he who finished thus lying opposite each other in the building which is their joint creation.

In 1447 Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan, the last of the Visconti family, and the perpetual enemy of Florence, died; whereupon two years of revolutions in Milan followed. Cosimo now executed his greatest stroke of foreign policy. The perpetual state of war with Milan wasted the revenues of Florence and prevented her development. Cosimo therefore determined to entirely change Florence's traditional foreign policy, and instead of Venice for ally and Milan for enemy, to reverse the position. He was opposed by many in his own state who had less political foresight, but he carried his point. Francesco Sforza, the successful soldier, who ever since his visit to Florence in 1435 had maintained a strong friendship with Cosimo, had since married Bianca Visconti, the late Duke's only child. To him Cosimo now gave both political assistance and liberal supplies of money, and as the result of this aid, Sforza, early in 1450, gained possession

[1] Brunelleschi's last work was to design for the Milan cathedral the vault crowned with a marble spire which covers the nave at the intersection of the nave and transept.

of Milan, and became its Duke and Cosimo's fast friend. Venice, of course, was greatly incensed, but Florence had no reason to fear Venice, which was neither so valuable as an ally nor so formidable as a foe as Milan. It proved a most successful stroke of policy, bringing to Florence peace instead of constant wars, and making Cosimo acknowledged as the most powerful force in the politics of Italy.

Contemporary historical events. 1440-1452.

As regards France and England at this time, the "Hundred Years' War" was still proceeding, devastating all northern France, but with the general result that the English were steadily losing their hold of that country.

In 1440 Frederick III. became Emperor. He was destined to hold the imperial title without dignity or influence for over fifty years (1440-1493).

In 1447 Pope Eugenius IV. died. As his successor there was elected a man of far greater energy and ability, "the eager little scholar," Tommaso Parentucelli, who was a great friend of Cosimo, and had acted as librarian to the Medici Library when it was being formed; and he, on becoming Pope, having taken part in all the life of Art and Learning at work in Florence, was burning to inaugurate a similar state of things in Rome. He took the name of Nicholas V.; "and," we are told, "he determined to make Rome, at this time so desolate and ruined, the metropolis of the world." He took active measures at once, both in the domain of Art and in that of Learning (p. 117).

In 1450 there was invented at Mayence[1] the art of printing, fraught with greater consequences to mankind than many other events of this time which then seemed of far greater importance than this at first obscure invention.

In 1452 the Emperor Frederick III. visited Italy, and on his way to Rome passed through Florence, where he stayed with Cosimo in the Medici Palace.

In the same year war again broke out in Italy, caused by Alfonso, King of Naples, who, on the death of Filippo Visconti, had taken his place as the disturbing factor in Italy, and who now invaded Florence's territory. In the war that followed Naples and Venice were ranged against Florence and her new ally, Milan. This was the balance of power which Cosimo had with much labour striven to create. It was shown to be thoroughly satisfactory, Venice and Naples being able to effect nothing against Florence and Milan; and after a time, discovering this, they became ready to agree to the peace which through the Pope was proposed and concluded. Pope Nicholas V. took no part in the war, urging all states to abandon their feuds and combine against the Turks to prevent the fall of Constantinople, then closely besieged; but none heeded him.

Cosimo. 1453. For nearly twenty years Cosimo's administration of foreign policy had given him unremitting labour. But these efforts had been crowned with success. He had by degrees brought all foreign countries to realise that he was the motive power in the Florentine state.

And he had also (through attaining unvarying success) gradually convinced his own countrymen that no one else could manage their affairs so well. It had required much patient tact to convert his countrymen to an opposite policy from their traditional one of having Venice for friend and Milan for foe, to counteract the ill-favour against him which, in consequence, Venice endeavoured to stir up in his own city, and to do all this without losing his position in the process. But the successful issue of the war of 1452 convinced all that his view was correct, and left none any longer anxious to dispute his administration of their affairs. And so long as he continued in the same course (and at the same time shunned, as he was wont, all ostentation of power), he might do almost what he would.

Not that Cosimo was immaculate. He often employed measures to consolidate his power which were harsh and indefensible; he contrived to obtain the banishment of families opposed to him, or to ruin them by financial methods which his power as a banker enabled him to carry out; and on the other hand he managed to elevate citizens dependent on him or devoted to his family. But such practices were part of the customary politics of the time, nor are they quite unknown in modern political life; while it was much that throughout the long and strenuous conflict which he had to wage to retain his position there was no bloodshed. Above all, the welfare of Florence as a whole was so successfully effected, both in home and foreign affairs, that much could be forgiven regarding measures necessary to maintain Cosimo in

power, since by this alone was that general result to the country achieved. And the Florentines evidently saw the matter in that light.

But Cosimo's political labours did not end even when he had achieved this result. He had to exercise a never-ceasing attention in order so to conduct the foreign policy of Florence amidst the intrigues of the time as to maintain a balance of power among the various Italian states, small as well as large, and thus secure peace in Italy and preserve Florence from the wasting effect of petty wars. The manifold anxieties of such a position were enough to break down any man; and even upon Cosimo they told severely. It was no wonder that he often sought a few hours' retreat from such anxieties in the quiet monastery of San Marco; nor that by the time he was sixty-four his health had already begun to give way.

Contemporary historical events. 1453.

In 1453 the "Hundred Years' War" between France and England came to an end. Between the years 1431 and 1453 the English had gradually lost all that they had conquered in France, and when at length in the latter year the aged Talbot was killed at the siege of Castillon, this war, which had lasted a hundred and sixteen years, ended. It left the condition of France utterly wretched. "From the Loire to the Somme all lay desert, given up to the wolves, and traversed only by the robber and the free lance."

But a greater event than the conclusion of this long war, and one whose effects still continue, occurred in the year 1453. This was the fall of

Constantinople, bringing to an end the Eastern Empire of Rome (29th May 1453). It was an event which struck all Europe with horror. For Constantinople was not merely the storehouse of the ancient learning and culture of the Roman Empire; it was also the one great capital city in Europe which had always, from its very birth, been Christian; a city whose foundation had signalised the adoption by the civilised world of that religion, and which had come to be called in the East "*the* Christian city." That such a city should be captured by the Turk, and be henceforth the headquarters of the Mahomedan religion, and of Turkish misrule and tyranny over the Christian populations of the Eastern countries, was hateful in the eyes of Europe. And it happened solely because the Western nations were too much occupied with mutual dissensions to combine to prevent it, as three successive Emperors of the East, in 1361, in 1401, and in 1439 had come in person to implore them to do.

The Emperor John Paleologus had died in 1448, and been succeeded by his younger brother, the brave Constantine Paleologus, the last of the long line of emperors who during eleven hundred and thirty years sat on the throne of Constantine the Great. It was a strange coincidence that the last Emperor of Constantinople should have borne the same name as the first. Of Constantine Paleologus we are told, "He was in no way inferior to any who ever sat upon that throne." In this final contest *he*, at any rate, did his part nobly, thereby throwing into deeper contrast the behaviour of the Western nations.

Deserted by Europe, with the armies of the Turks all round him, with none but himself to depend upon, with far too small a garrison to defend thirteen miles of walls, with a vast crowd of women and children and other non-combatants, the defenceless population of a great city, all looking to him to defend them from the atrocities of the terrible Turks, with every sort of difficulty to be coped with inside the city, whose inhabitants saw themselves abandoned by Christendom, Constantine, solely by his own ability and strength of character, conducted for a year and a half a splendid defence, and in such sort that instead of the ignoble scenes witnessed when Rome fell before Alaric, the manner of the final fall of Constantinople has been felt to be one of the most glorious episodes in all her long history.

The immediate consequences of the fall of Constantinople were four:—

Intoxicated by their victory the Turks, wild to press on and subdue the whole of Europe (where Mahomed II. now planned to set up at Rome the capital of a world-wide empire) advanced into Hungary. But there the brave John Hunniades barred their way, like another Charles Martel, and they got no further.

To the Pope, Nicholas V., who alone had laboured to prevent it, the fall of Constantinople was the cause of the deepest grief. He tried to rouse France, England, Germany, and Venice to retake Constantinople and turn the Turks out of Europe. But what with the incapacity of the Emperor Frederick III. and the general disunion between the different countries, he could effect

nothing. After two years he died (1455), it was said of grief and horror at the capture of the Christian city by the infidel, and at his failure to rouse the Western nations to retake it.

To Venice the fall of her rival was her doom; she began to decay from that hour, losing territory after territory to the Turks, and her commerce at the same time. It was a just retribution. For it was the crime of her treacherous attack upon and capture of Constantinople in 1204 (committed under the name of a "crusade," and solely to satisfy her insatiable greed of wealth) which so weakened the Eastern Empire that the decline in power wrought thereby ended, after two hundred and fifty years of constant defeat, in the final fall of Constantinople, and brought the Turks into Europe. And it was fitting that on Venice should fall the chief punishment. Her wealth rapidly departed; others, Portugal especially, gained the commerce which she lost; and by the end of the century the decay of the once mighty Republic was fully established.

To Florence the fall of Constantinople was a gain. It scattered westwards all that accumulation of the ancient learning which Constantinople had so long preserved, most of which naturally gravitated to the city where many of the leading men of Constantinople had been hospitably entertained only fourteen years before, and where they knew they would find friends. And this helped forward still further that pre-eminence in Learning and Art which was Florence's greatest glory.

As to what happened to Constantinople itself, that is best told in a single sentence by a traveller

of our own day, who writes:—"I have never in all my travels grieved so much as at the sight of the once beautiful city, defiled, squalid, and misgoverned."

Cosimo. 1453-1463.

We have now to look at Cosimo from a financial point of view: at his general as well as his charitable expenditure, and the financial arrangements made between the two branches of the family.

Cosimo, besides his work in the world of politics, had to administer a great banking business. In this sphere he has, by all writers, been given the reputation of a financier of the first rank. Notwithstanding his immense expenditure (which included private subsidies towards State expenses, the entertainment of distinguished visitors to Florence, large sums given to advance the cause of Learning and Art, and the equivalent of a million sterling given to charitable objects), he more than doubled the fortune inherited from his father, and left his son and successor Piero the wealthiest man at that time in Europe.

Another feature of his financial work is the way in which he made his operations as a banker assist those connected with his position as head of the State. He frequently made his immense banking transactions a weapon with which to force other countries to the course required for the welfare of Florence. Thus by his financial assistance the Venetian Republic were enabled to withstand the united attacks of the French and of Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan; but on being deprived by Cosimo of this support were unable to do so. Again, in the war of

1452, in which Venice and Naples were allied against Florence, one of the chief means by which Cosimo obtained his success was by calling in such immense debts from those countries that they were deprived of resources for continuing the war. Again during the War of the Roses Edward IV. obtained such enormous sums from Cosimo's agent in England that he might almost be considered as the means of maintaining that king upon the English throne.

As regards charities, the *Libro di Ragione* shows that Cosimo's private expenditure on churches, monasteries, and charitable institutions exceeded 400,000 gold florins;[1] and this at a time when the whole income of the Florentine state did not reach more than half that sum.

About the year 1453, as Cosimo was growing old and his brother Lorenzo was already dead, a computation was made of the family income and a resolution come to between the two branches as to the manner in which the profits of their banking business should be divided between them. The share of these profits which thus fell to each branch of the family was equal to about half a million sterling—an enormous fortune in those times.

Cosimo built for his family, besides the Medici Palace in the city itself, various villas outside Florence. The chief of these were, Careggi, about two miles to the north-west of the city, Cafaggiolo,[2] in the valley of the Mugello, and the Villa Medici, on the slope of Fiesole, built by him for his son Giovanni. Careggi was

[1] Equal in our present money to two millions sterling.
[2] *See* vol. ii. p. 338.

Cosimo's favourite residence, and there he was fond of gathering round him the learned society which he loved.

Contemporary historical events. 1454-1464.

The chief historical events in other countries during the last ten years of Cosimo's life were the following:—

In England, two years after the "Hundred Years' War" with France had ended, began in 1455 the "War of the Roses." This kept England in a state of civil war during the next thirty years.

As regards the Papacy, on the death of Pope Nicholas V. in 1455 the Pope elected was Calixtus III. He died in 1458, and was succeeded by the celebrated Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pius II.), the chief episodes of whose life are depicted in the series of fresco pictures by Pinturicchio in the library of the cathedral of Siena. This Pope paid a visit to Florence in 1460, and stayed with Cosimo in the Medici Palace.

In Venice there came in 1457 the end of the long and glorious thirty-four years' rule of the Doge Francesco Foscari, who died in that year. He was the last of her great Doges.

In France, in 1461, Charles VII., the king placed on the throne by Joan of Arc, died; in the same year that in England Henry VI. was dethroned in favour of Edward IV. Charles was succeeded by his cowardly and treacherous son, Louis XI., "the royal trickster." Detestable as were his long list of murders, carried out by the most treacherous methods, he brought order out of chaos in France.

Art. 1434-1464.

The thirty years' rule of Cosimo shows us the new movement in Art advancing with rapid strides to greater and greater achievements through the genius of Donatello, Fra Angelico, Luca della Robbia, Ghiberti, and Lippi.

Donatello.

Donatello, the third in age of the four leaders of the Renaissance in Art, exercised by far the deepest influence of the four. Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, and Masaccio each did their part; but Donatello infused a new spirit into the whole matter, breathing into it the breath of life. Sixteen years old when the new movement in Art began, and living to the age of eighty-one, he exercised for fifty years the leading influence in the world of Art. We have therefore to look at him under two aspects, (i) as a sculptor, and (ii) as a guide to the Art world as to the true aim of Art.

(i) Donatello, the first sculptor "in the round" since the time of Greek art, introduced as great a revolution in sculpture as Giotto did in Painting. The nature of this revolution has been well described by a recent writer of his life as follows:[1]—

"In order to estimate the full significance of the new departure in Sculpture inaugurated by Donatello, that sculpturing of isolated statues which had not been attempted since the last artist of antiquity laid down his chisel, it must be borne in mind that for centuries the accepted form for this art had been relief; while also sculpture had not

[1] *Donatello*, by Hope Rea.

been used as a prime vehicle *by itself* for conveying the artist's idea, but as an adjunct and ornament to architecture.

"Thus in Orcagna's celebrated shrine in Or San Michele in honour of the Madonna, we find the Madonna sentiment diffused throughout all its parts. Her story is told by a series of reliefs; her character is suggested by a carefully-thought-out arrangement of figures representing the accepted virtues of that character, appropriately placed between those stories which appear to illustrate them; symbols are freely employed; and even the material and colours, the white marble, spangled with precious stones and mosaics, contribute their qualities to aid in the expression of the ideal associated in the mind of the artist with the personality of the Blessed Virgin. This was essentially the mediæval form of Art.

"Now the genius of classic art was exactly the opposite of this. Where the mediæval genius was diffuse, the classic genius was concentrated. Where the mediæval sculptor flew to symbols to express 'the eternal things of the supernal glory,' the sculptor of the classic age, choosing the most perfect form in nature—the human—so refined and idealised it, and so transfused it with the spirit and thought desired to be expressed, that it spoke by suggestion to all who had ears to hear. Donatello's predecessors were mediæval, one and all; he himself was a scholar in their school; yet when only twenty years of age, and twelve years before he was admitted as a master in his guild, we see him turn his back on the entire mediæval method, and choosing the way of antiquity, begin his series of isolated heroic statues."

Thus did Donatello, while still quite young,

feel the inspiration of that re-birth in Art which was permeating all Florence; and four years after Ghiberti began his first pair of bronze doors, on which Donatello had worked as an assistant, this youth of twenty made that bold and independent return to earlier principles which marks the true genius.[1]

After various statues representing Joshua, Daniel, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Abraham, St Peter, St Mark, the marble statue of David, and others, all intended to occupy niches on the walls of the cathedral, the campanile, or the church of Or San Michele, Donatello produced in 1416 his *St George*, generally considered his masterpiece, which gave him the position of the first sculptor of his time.

But Donatello was to go further than this. About the year 1432[2] he executed for Cosimo his bronze statue of *David*; and this statue introduced a new era in the art of sculpture. For it was the first isolated nude statue that had been made for more than a thousand years. Even the *St George* (besides embodying no attempt to depict the human form undraped) had only been made for a niche; but this statue of *David* was intended to stand in the *cortile* of Cosimo's palace and be looked at from every side. This "remarkable innovation," as Lord Balcarres justly calls it,[3] advanced Donatello's reputation to a still greater

[1] He was not helped by any preceding intermediate period, leading gradually to this change. For the sculptures of Niccolò Pisano, much as they were in advance of all that had gone before, still appertained essentially to the mediæval method: as decorations to architecture, not as isolated statues with an independent message of their own.

[2] Vasari says that it was finished before Cosimo's exile in 1433.

[3] *Donatello*, by Lord Balcarres.

degree than even his *St George* had done, having an immediate effect on all the sculptors of his time, and spreading Donatello's fame far beyond Italy. Seeing it as we now do in the museum of the Bargello, surrounded by many others, we are apt to forget the distinguished position which this statue holds as the leader of all that followed it in sculpture.

The only others of Donatello's numerous works[1] necessary to notice here are his statue of *Judith slaying Holofernes*, and his medallions copied from antique gems. The *Judith* was executed, like the *David*, for the *cortile* of the Medici Palace, and was finished shortly after the family moved into the palace in 1440.[2] This statue had an important history some fifty years later (*see* chap. x.). The medallions, which still remain in excellent preservation over the arches of the *cortile*, are copies in marble of eight antique gems, the subjects being Diomede and the Palladium, Bacchus and Ariadne, Ulysses and Athena, Dædalus and Icarus, and four others of minor interest. The original gems were in the Medici collection. Whether these medallions were completed and placed in position at the time when the palace was first occupied in 1440 (as seems most probable), or at a later date in Cosimo's life, is a debated point.

(ii) But greater still is Donatello's fame as a

[1] Donatello's favourite subject was undoubtedly St John the Baptist. He has sculptured him in boyhood, youth, and manhood, in relief, bust, and full-length statue, in marble and in bronze; and there are more than twenty of his works on this one subject alone in the various galleries of Europe.

[2] Lord Balcarres considers it "was probably made shortly before Donatello's journey to Padua," which took place in 1443.

guide to the aim which Art should set before itself, a message which he taught to sculptors and painters alike. Hitherto the aim that artists had striven after was the production of as life-like a representation as possible of nature; and this alone they had found difficult enough. Donatello introduced a further step, teaching *that form must be a mere means to an end, that of conveying some deep thought to the mind*; that Art, in fact, must be a language.[1] "The outward rendered expressive of the inward; the body instinct with spirit; the soul made incarnate"; this (which has been said to define truth in Art) was in brief Donatello's message to the Art world; and it produced the great stride forward which Art now took. It was, in fact, the inauguration of the whole difference between classic and modern art, the former aiming no further than to portray absolute perfection of form, the latter aiming (simultaneously with this) at conveying some message to the mind. It is this characteristic of Donatello's genius which has caused him to be called by his countrymen "Il maestro di chi sanno" ("The master of those who know"). His statue of *St George*, in which the ideal to which he gives expression is that of the flesh under the dominion of the spirit, is the best example of this characteristic in his art.

Donatello also revived a branch of art which had been dead since the time of ancient Rome, that of casting statues, and particularly equestrian statues, in bronze—a difficult work, since all its

[1] Giotto no doubt had vaguely felt this, and striven after it so far as his limited powers of technique permitted; but his successors had none of his spirit, and had been mainly occupied in copying only his manner.

details had in the course of nine centuries become unknown. In 1453, after many difficulties, he completed for the Venetian Republic the first bronze equestrian statue executed since Roman times, that of the Venetian general, Gattamelata, at Padua.

His works in bas-relief have also certain characteristics of their own, notably that exceedingly low relief called *stiacciato*, which he often used with very beautiful effect.[1] Perkins draws attention to his treatment of the hair, saying that, "though the ancient sculptors were unrivalled in their treatment of hair in the abstract, no sculptor, ancient or modern, ever surpassed Donatello in giving it all its qualities of growth and waywardness."[2]

To compare Donatello with his great successor Michelangelo is absurd. Donatello's fame is that of the leader, of the man who revolutionised sculpture and taught all who came after him what Art's true aim should be; and no excellences in Michelangelo, or any other successor, can touch the point on which Donatello's fame rests.

Fra Angelico.

San Marco not only possessed learned men among its community, and a Prior who was beloved by all who knew him, but also numbered among its members the greatest painter of the day, Fra Angelico.[3] His earlier paintings are to be seen at Cortona, but in 1437 he began his paint-

[1] *See* the reliefs on the helmet of Goliath in his bronze statue of *David* in the Bargello.

[2] Perkins' *Tuscan Sculptors*.

[3] His Christian name was Guido; on becoming a friar he took the name of Giovanni; his family name is unknown. He was born at Vicchio, in the Mugello. He was fifty years old when he began painting in Florence.

ing at Florence, being at Cosimo's instance set to work, as soon as any portions of the new monastery were sufficiently far advanced for the purpose, to decorate the walls of the chapter-house, cloisters, and corridors with his frescoes. Amongst these the large fresco in the chapter-house representing *The Crucifixion* (with the saints of the New Testament on one side and the prominent saints of the Middle Ages on the other) was specially ordered by Cosimo, who "gave much helpful advice in regard to the details." It was one of the first of Fra Angelico's frescoes painted in San Marco. Cosimo also made Fra Angelico paint, in the cell which he kept for himself, a fresco picture of the Adoration of the Magi, "desiring to have this example of Eastern kings laying down their crowns at the manger of Bethlehem always before his eyes as a reminder for his own guidance as a ruler."

From time to time we meet with a master who, having made some line in Art specially his own, and perfected it to such a point that it is felt that no further advance in that line is possible to man, remains for all time its solitary exponent. It was thus with Fra Angelico. He reigns supreme and alone in that line which he chose, "wherein he sought only to express the inner life of the adoring soul." At the same time he was an artist who steadily improved in technical skill, and his later paintings show that he had carefully studied the works of Masaccio.

Regarding the general style of his painting, Mrs Ady says as follows:[1]—

"All the mystic thought of the mediæval

[1] *The Painters of Florence*, by Mrs Ady.

world, the passionate love of God and man that beat in the heart of St Francis, the yearnings of Dante's soul after a higher and more perfect order of things, . . . are embodied in the art of Fra Angelico. . . . The brilliancy of colour and richness which he gives in his pictures of angels and heavenly scenes are marvellous. In his picture at Cortona of the *Annunciation* (Fra Angelico's first version of his favourite subject) the angel's wings are gold tipped with ruby light, and his robe is a marvel of decorative beauty, studded all over with little tongues of flame and embroidered in mystic patterns. . . . His picture of the *Coronation of the Virgin* is one of the glories of the Louvre, and in it he has lavished the richest ornament and the most radiant colour on the angels who stand before the throne, each with a spark of fire on his forehead and glittering stars on his purple wings."

Ruskin, speaking of Fra Angelico's painting from the more technical side, remarks as follows:—

"The art of Fra Angelico, both in drawing and colouring, is perfect, and his work may be recognised at any distance, by its rainbow play and brilliancy, like a piece of opal among common marbles. In order to effect clearer distinction between heavenly beings and those of this world, he represents the former as clothed in draperies of the purest colour, crowned with glories of burnished gold, and *entirely shadowless*; the flames on their foreheads waving brighter as they move; the sparkles streaming from their purple wings like the glitter of the sun upon the sea; while they listen in the pauses of alternate song for the prolonging of the trumpet blast, and the answering of psalm, and harp, and cymbal, throughout the endless deep, and from all the

star shores of Heaven. . . . This mode of treatment, combined as it is with exquisite choice of gesture and disposition of drapery, gives perhaps the best idea of spiritual beings which the human mind is capable of forming."[1]

For one other point Fra Angelico's pictures are notable; in them we have for the first time heads full of individual character; while he was the first to begin introducing in his pictures portraits of his friends, thus doing much to help forward another line in Art, portrait-painting, which a generation later became a recognised branch of painting. In this way he gives us in his picture of the *Deposition from the Cross*, now in the Accademia at Florence, a portrait of his friend Michelozzo, the architect who was being employed by Cosimo in the rebuilding of San Marco.[2]

Fra Angelico's period of painting in Florence lasted for nine years (1437-1446). In 1446 Pope Eugenius IV., having seen so much of his work at Florence, summoned him to Rome; but that Pope died almost immediately afterwards (1447). However, his successor Nicholas V. was, as previously noted, most anxious to inaugurate a new state of things in Rome as regards Art. One of his first efforts in this direction was (after the example of the monastery of San Marco in Florence) to begin covering the walls of the Vatican with frescoes; and this was the commencement of that long series of renowned frescoes which, added to by Pope after Pope,

[1] *Modern Painters.*

[2] In the picture Michelozzo is the man in the black *capuchon*, with his foot on the third rung of the ladder.

now form so large a part of the treasures of the Vatican. Nicholas V. began with his private chapel, and set Fra Angelico to work to decorate its walls. Thus these frescoes in the chapel of Nicholas V. are important both as the first of all the frescoes in the Vatican, and also as being Fra Angelico's last work. They took him the greater part of the next five years (1447-1452); and these frescoes in particular show how greatly he had profited by careful study of Masaccio's works, for while they have still his own grace, and skill in delineating character, they are instinct with Masaccio's power. In them we have from Fra Angelico two portraits of Nicholas V. in the two pictures representing Sixtus II. (A.D. 257) ordaining the Deacon St Lawrence, and giving into his charge the treasures of the Church. Fra Angelico died at Rome in 1455.

Simultaneously with the above work in Art, Nicholas V. commenced the formation of a library in the Vatican after the pattern of the Medici Library in Florence, and collected a large number of manuscript books, and appointed a librarian; but the whole was dispersed by his successors, and it was not until Sixtus IV. revived the institution in 1475 that the Vatican Library began its existence.

Luca Della Robbia (1).

Luca della Robbia, born in 1400, was employed as a youth on the bronze doors of the Baptistery. After a time he began working on his own account, and struck out a new line of his own. He executed reliefs in marble, in bronze, and in glazed terra-cotta, devoting himself

specially to the varied expressions of the human features; and his works, by their truth to nature, and the deep feeling which they breathe, "have won for him an honoured place amongst those who gave an impulse to the Renaissance."[1] Speaking of his art generally, Miss Cruttwell says:— "He is first of all the imaginative sculptor and poet, who embodied the grandest ideals in forms worthy of Pheidean Greece."[2]

In 1438 Luca produced his beautiful relief of the *Cantoria*, executed for one of the organ lofts of the cathedral,[3] and representing groups of boys and girls singing and little children dancing, which at once placed him among the foremost artists of his time. This relief in marble, from its truth to nature and the grace of movement of its figures, was almost as much a wonder to the time as Ghiberti's first pair of bronze doors had been, and had much effect in helping still further forward both sculpture and painting towards a life-like representation of human figures. It is meant to illustrate the 150th Psalm, each of the panels portraying one of the six verses of that Psalm. Regarding this magnificent frieze,[4] the Marchesa Burlamacchi says:—

"Luca della Robbia's *Cantorie* children live and move, the very action of their throats can be seen as they sing, the soul of music is in their faces. There is a swing in their movements as they dance, a grace of attitude, and an elegance of flowing drapery, that throughout the works of the Renaissance has never been surpassed."[5]

[1] Dr Wilhelm Bode.
[2] *Luca e Andrea della Robbia*, by Miss Cruttwell.
[3] Donatello executed the other. Both are now in the Opera del Duomo, Florence.
[4] There is a copy of this work in the South Kensington Museum.
[5] *Luca della Robbia*, by the Marchesa Burlamacchi.

Besides the *Cantoria*, Luca della Robbia's other chief works in marble and bronze were the five panels on the north side of the campanile, executed in 1439, representing the development of man's intellect in the arts and sciences; the tomb of Benozzo Federighi, Bishop of Fiesole, now in the church of Sta. Trinità, executed in 1454, and by some considered Luca's best work in marble; and the bronze doors of the sacristy of the Duomo, completed after many years' labour in 1469. His works in glazed terra-cotta will be considered later (chap. vi.).

Ghiberti (3).

In 1452, six years after Brunelleschi had died and Fra Angelico's painting in Florence come to an end, Ghiberti at last finished his second pair of bronze doors for the Baptistery. These, which Michelangelo a hundred years later declared "fit to be the gates of Paradise," are considered Ghiberti's masterpiece. They represent scenes from Old Testament history, and Ruskin remarks: "The book of Genesis, in all the fulness of its incidents, in all the depth of its meaning, is bound within the leaf-borders of the gates of Ghiberti."[1] They had taken Ghiberti twenty-eight years. He had begun his first pair of doors at the age of twenty-three; he finished his second at the age of seventy-three; and he died three years afterwards. Excepting his three statues outside Or San Michele and one or two minor works, these two pairs of bronze doors were his life's work. As Alexandre Dumas says: "A whole life spent over this marvellous bronze!"

The pathos of the young Ghiberti beginning this beautiful work of art when full of youth and

[1] Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*,

strength, amidst all the enthusiasm of the first outburst of the Renaissance, and finishing it when he was old and worn with years, and when so many who had seen its commencement had passed away, cannot but touch all who think of it. It was another generation who now saw its completion from that which had seen it begun. Cosimo himself, now sixty-three, had then been only a boy of thirteen, Fra Angelico fifteen, Michelozzo eleven, Luca della Robbia a child of a year old. Masaccio, the boy who had worked under him, had covered himself with glory in another line, and was long ago dead. Brunelleschi, his passionate rival, had had time to learn another art, and to make his name famous therein, and was gone. Of all the band of eager competitors for the work he alone remained.

As we look at these beautiful doors, how many thoughts crowd upon us. The terrible sufferings of Florence from the plague, which caused their construction; the celebrated competition with its intense and passionate rivalry; the whole lifetime of work spent in their production; all the art life which surged around them as they lay gradually taking shape in the workshop of Ghiberti,[1] hard by the place where they have now stood for four hundred and fifty years; the school of Art which that workshop became for Florence; the band of eager young assistants, some of whom had since made names which are now famous throughout the world. The final triumph when they were at last completed; the solemn function when they were erected in their place; the grey-

[1] Ghiberti's workshop was in the house which is now No. 29 Via Bufalini, opposite the hospital of Sta. Maria Nuova.

haired man of seventy-three, bent with age, who had begun them in his youth, and who, had he had another lifetime before him, would have destroyed even these, and begun yet another effort after something more perfect still; the pride of all who had had a part however humble in their production; the excitement and rapture of a whole city. Lastly, the many things of which they were the origin and the matrix, the sculpture of Donatello, the painting of Masaccio, and all that grew from these; so that as we look at Ghiberti's panels, we see mirrored in them the triumphs of Raphael and of Michelangelo. It is thoughts such as these which force themselves upon our minds as we stand in the crowded modern thoroughfare, with its trams and tourists and life of the Florence of to-day around us, and look at Ghiberti's doors.

Filippo Lippi.

In 1441 Filippo Lippi, who had been Masaccio's pupil, finished his painting of the *Coronation of the Madonna*, considered his best picture in Florence. A greater contrast could scarcely be found than that between the two chief painters of Cosimo's time, Fra Angelico and Filippo Lippi; for Lippi was in everything the antithesis of his contemporary, Fra Angelico. The orphan son of a butcher, he was left as a boy in charge of an aunt, who, finding him an idle ne'er-do-well, put him as a novice into the nearest monastic community, that of the Carmelites, in whose church of the Carmine Masaccio was then painting his frescoes. The monks, owing to his laziness, could do nothing with him, but, watching Masaccio at his work, Lippi thought this an easier task than learning to read and write; and

Masaccio, finding he could draw, taught him his art. Lippi was sixteen when Masaccio died, and in the following year, Vasari says, "Lippi boldly threw off the monastic habit, and took to painting for a livelihood." Though he signs himself "Frater Filippus," he had no right to the term, as he had entirely discarded his vows, and owing to his disreputable conduct no religious community would own him. His life was a disturbed one, as his drunken character and constant frauds upon those who employed him caused him to be always in trouble; after being several times brought up before the authorities for various misdemeanours, at length for a particularly flagrant case of embezzlement he was flogged.

Lippi's character, however, only affects his credit as a painter by accounting for the kind of success he achieved. He had (as was to be expected) no ears for the message which Donatello was at this time teaching, and consequently his pictures on religious subjects have an exceedingly mundane character. Nevertheless, the sweet seriousness of his Madonnas falls in no way short of those of Fra Angelico, and the faces of his children are full of a quaint, mischievous character which is delightful, while in both drawing and colouring he shows the immense advance which had now taken place in Painting. And it is here that Lippi's true claim to fame lies. Masaccio, the only man who up to that time had found out the true methods of the art of Painting, had died too soon himself to be able to make known his discovery, except to the few who could visit Florence and the Brancacci chapel. It was left for Lippi, the rough boy whom he had

taught, to show the world Masaccio's discovery. And Lippi did so. Vasari says:—"Taught as he had been by Masaccio, he was a faithful follower of Masaccio's style;" and he adds that he followed the latter's methods so faithfully that it "appeared that the spirit of Masaccio had entered Lippi's body." Thus what Masaccio had done for the art of Painting is chiefly to be seen by a comparison of Lippi's pictures with those of Masaccio's immediate predecessors, the Giotteschi. Lippi's principal picture in Florence is his *Coronation of the Virgin* (painted for Cosimo,[1] and now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti); but his best work is considered to be his frescoes in the cathedral at Prato, painted between 1456 and 1465.

A serious error of the last generation has caused much injustice to Masaccio, and has been widely spread through Robert Browning's poem on Lippi. He makes Lippi speak of Masaccio as a "youngster" then just learning to paint,[2] Lippi saying that after his death this "Guidi"[3] may

[1] It was not an easy thing to get any work out of Lippi. There is an amusing story of how, when he was painting this picture for Cosimo, the latter being at last in despair (owing to Lippi's lazy ways) of ever seeing the picture finished, had him locked up in the room in the Medici Palace where it was being painted, declaring that he should not be let out until the work was done. Whereupon Lippi tied his bed-clothes into a rope, let himself down from the window into the street, and disappeared into the slums of Florence, not to be found again for many days.

[2] His words are:—

"We've a youngster here,

. . . . . .

His name is Guidi,—he'll not mind the monks;
They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them talk;—
He picks my practice up. He'll paint apace;
I hope so, though I never live so long,
I know what's sure to follow."

All of which is, of course, an exact reversal of the position.

[3] Tommaso Guidi was Masaccio's name. The other youths who were his companions gave him the nickname of "Masaccio" (Clumsy Tom), by which he is known in Art.

perhaps rob him of his laurels. This is owing to Masaccio's date being in Browning's time imagined to be later than it really is, so that Lippi was supposed to have *preceded him*; with the result that Lippi, instead of Masaccio, gained all the credit of the great advance in Painting which exists between the Giotteschi and Masaccio. The pathos which throughout attaches to Masaccio is thus still further increased. Not only is he crushed with poverty throughout his life, and his great fame only won after death, but in addition even those laurels are in later times given to the pupil whom he had out of a rough kindness taught for nothing. And then, as the crowning point, this Tommaso Guidi, this great genius, who is the founder of all modern painting, and from whom even Raphael was glad to learn, becomes known to posterity only as "Clumsy Tom." The fuller information now available has put this matter right, and more particularly the registers of the *catasto* tax for the years 1421 to 1428, which give definite and conclusive evidence as to Masaccio's date and circumstances; though even without this Vasari's remark should have sufficed to prevent the mistake. Lippi died in 1469, at the age of fifty-seven.

Minor Sculptors.

Though the transcendent genius of Donatello threw all others into the shade, there were various other distinguished sculptors who also flourished at this period, making Cosimo's time specially notable in this branch of Art. The chief of these were:—

Desiderio da Settignano.—A pupil of Donatello, and eminent among the sculptors of this time.

Perkins[1] considers his tomb of Carlo Marsuppini in Sta. Croce one of the three finest tombs in Tuscany; while he says of his bust of Marietta Palla Strozzi[2]:—"It would be difficult to point out a bust, which more thoroughly combines those peculiar features of the best *quattrocento* work, high technical excellence, refinement of taste, delicacy of treatment, and purity of design." The beautiful head of St Cecilia in *stiacciato* (low relief), now the property of Lord Wemyss, which used to be attributed to Donatello, is now said to be by Desiderio.

Bernardo and Antonio Rossellino.—Bernardo Rossellino executed the fine tomb of Leonardo Bruni in Sta. Croce, and the monument of Beata Villana in the Rucellai chapel in Sta. Maria Novella. Of Antonio Rossellino, Perkins says:—"He possessed grace, delicacy of treatment, dignity, and a rare feeling of beauty, and sweetness of expression, as we see in the noble monument of the Cardinal Portogallo at San Miniato, Florence"; he considers this tomb one of the most beautiful in Italy.

Mino da Fiesole.—Another still more famous sculptor of this period who outlived those previously mentioned. His works show a refined taste, great delicacy of detail, and much devotional feeling. Regarding his tomb of Bishop Salutati in the cathedral of Fiesole, Perkins says:—"The bust of the bishop is certainly one of the most living and strongly characterised 'counterfeit presentments' of nature ever produced in marble." Mino da Fiesole also executed the beautiful tabernacle in the Medici chapel in Sta. Croce, and many busts, altar-pieces,

[1] Perkins' *Tuscan Sculptors.*
[2] This bust is now at Berlin.

and other celebrated works during the time of Piero il Gottoso and Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Antonio and Piero Pollajuolo. — These two brothers were celebrated sculptors, painters, goldsmiths, and medallists of the time. Their renown belongs almost entirely to Antonio, his younger brother Piero producing little notable work. Antonio's principal existing work in Florence is the Silver Altar of the Baptistery (kept in the Opera del Duomo); and in Rome his two tombs of Pope Sixtus IV. and Pope Innocent VIII. The fine medal of the Pazzi Conspiracy hitherto attributed to him is now said to be by Bertoldo, the well-known pupil of Donatello. Antonio Pollajuolo was no less celebrated as a painter than as a sculptor and medallist. In 1460 three large and very famous canvases, "five braccia high" (about nine feet), were painted by him for the hall of the Medici Palace, depicting the combats of Hercules with the lion, with the hydra, and with Antæus. Vasari describes them in detail, and speaks with great admiration of their execution. When the Medici Palace was sacked in 1494 they were appropriated by the Signoria, and removed to the council hall of the Palazzo della Signoria, where they hung for many years, but have since been lost. Vasari, in mentioning them, states that they were painted for Lorenzo the Magnificent, but this must be a mistake on his part; for in a letter of Pollajuolo's own he states that he painted them in 1460, and at that date Cosimo was head of the house, and his grandson Lorenzo a boy of only eleven years old; so that they were painted for Cosimo. There are two small panel pictures on the same subject by Pollajuolo, now in the Uffizi

Gallery, evidently painted about the same time, and these give us an idea of what the celebrated canvases which adorned the walls of the principal reception room of the Medici Palace in the time of Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo were like.

Cosimo. 1463-1464. Cosimo grew old very rapidly, suffering severely from gout, and in his later years becoming very infirm, which caused him to leave the home affairs of the State to a very large extent to others; a condition of things under which we first hear of the incapable Luca Pitti, who during the last four years of Cosimo's life thrust himself into a prominent place in public matters,[1] though Cosimo still kept foreign affairs in his own hands. His long labours for his country's welfare had borne their full fruit; none now questioned or attempted to disturb the position he had so deservedly gained;[2] we find the Signoria in an official document (a letter to the Venetian Republic) calling him "Capo della Republica," though he held no official position at the time; and "head of the Republic" he was universally acknowledged to be to the very end of his life.[3]

Giovanni. Cosimo, like his father, had two sons, Piero, born in 1416, and Giovanni, born in 1421. The death of the latter at the age of forty-two is the last prominent incident connected with Cosimo's life. Giovanni[4] had all the family love of learning, and many rare manuscript

[1] Luca Pitti was Gonfaloniere in 1460.

[2] A position such that it has given rise to a Tuscan proverb, "So you think yourself a Cosimo de' Medici": a retort used to a presumptuous person.

[3] Without being Gonfaloniere; an office which Cosimo only held twice, once in 1434 and once in 1439.

[4] Plate IV. Portrait bust by Mino da Fiesole.

GIOVANNI, SON OF COSIMO PATER PATRIAE.
Bust by Mino da Fiesole.

Alinari] [*Bargello Museum.*

books collected by him are still in the Medici Library in San Lorenzo. His portrait bust by Mino da Fiesole, who knew him well, gives us a thoroughly reliable representation of his appearance. As the chronic ill-health of his elder brother Piero made it unlikely that the latter would survive their father, Giovanni was brought up as the future head of the family, was looked on by all as his father's successor, and was Cosimo's favourite son. To a family situated as the Medici were at this time, it was of the utmost importance that whoever succeeded Cosimo as head of the house should be both capable and popular; so that Cosimo's feeling regarding his two sons was not unnatural. Nor did Giovanni come short of his father's hopes in this respect. His ability, good sense, tact, and knowledge of men made him highly popular, and he promised to be a worthy successor to Cosimo. So as Piero's health grew from year to year worse, all the hopes of the family rested on Giovanni. The latter was married to Ginevra degli Albizzi, one of that family who had so violently opposed Cosimo in his earlier years and tried to compass his ruin and death. Giovanni and Ginevra's only child, a son, then nine years old, died in 1461.

But alas for human hopes! In 1463, one year before Cosimo's own death, Giovanni, the hope of the house, died. The grief into which the family were plunged at this serious misfortune was very great. Cosimo was broken down, physically helpless, and his death soon to be expected; Piero was likely to die any day; and his eldest son, Lorenzo, was only fourteen years old. So that with Giovanni dead it seemed that all the prospects of the family

were destroyed ; for it was well known that powerful enemies (including all those other families jealous of the one which was rising to such eminence) were on the watch for an opportunity to bring its power to an end. There is a pathetic story of the infirm and aged Cosimo, after this death of his favourite son, having himself carried through the rooms of the spacious palace which he had built (and which had seen two such gaps made in the family within three years), and several times repeating, "Too large a house now for so small a family."

Giovanni was buried in the family church of San Lorenzo, which was then just finished and had been endowed by Cosimo. Giovanni di Bicci and Piccarda had already been buried in the "Old Sacristy,"[1] and their grandson, this second Giovanni, was now also interred there. And when six years later his brother Piero died, the sculptor Verrocchio, Donatello's best pupil,[2] was called upon to design a joint tomb for the two brothers, and executed the very tasteful one which stands in the archway between the sacristy and the chapel of the Madonna, consisting of a sarcophagus of porphyry with bronze acanthus leaves climbing over it. It is Verrocchio's earliest important work.

Cosimo. 1464. Cosimo died on the 1st August 1464 at his beloved villa of Careggi, at the age of seventy-five. Piero, in relating their grand-

[1] The "New Sacristy," begun in 1516 by Leo X., was intended by him as a second mausoleum for the house of Medici. To it was again added in 1604 (by Ferdinand I.) a third and yet more sumptuous mausoleum for the later members of the family. The entrance to both these from the church is now closed, and a separate entrance to them provided from the cloisters.

[2] Donatello himself was then dead.

father's death to his two sons the following day, says as follows:—

"He counselled me that, as you had good abilities, I ought to bring you up well, and you would then relieve me of many cares. . . . He said that he did not wish any pomp or demonstration at his funeral. . . . He reminded me, as he had told me before, of where he wished to be buried in San Lorenzo, and said all in such an orderly manner, and with so much prudence and spirit, that it was wonderful. He added that his life had been long, therefore he was well content to leave it when God willed. Yesterday morning he had himself completely dressed; he then made his confession to the prior of San Lorenzo; after which he caused Mass to be said, making the responses as if he were in health. Afterwards, being asked to make profession of his faith, he said the Creed word for word, said the confession himself, and then received the Holy Sacrament, doing so with as much devotion as one can describe, having first asked pardon of every one for any wrongs he had done them. Which things have encouraged me in my hope towards God."

Cosimo's popularity with his countrymen lasted to the very end, as well as the respect with which he was regarded by the rulers of all other states. He was buried as he had desired without any pomp, and at first in the Old Sacristy of San Lorenzo. The Signoria had planned to give him a magnificent funeral and a very imposing monument, but the Medici family, on the proposal being put before them, refused to have either. The people, however, were determined to give him some special honour. A public decree was therefore passed

by the Signoria conferring on him the title of *Pater Patriae*, and ordering that this should be inscribed by the Republic on his tomb. It therefore bears the honourable inscription:—"COSIMUS MEDICES HIC SITUS EST DECRETO PUBLICO PATER PATRIAE." No greater honour could have been done him than that such a title should be thus given him after his death; and by this title of *Pater Patriae* he has ever since been known in history.

But the honour done to Cosimo's memory was not confined to giving him the title of "Father of his country." A further and more peculiar honour was conferred. San Lorenzo, founded in such ancient times,[1] is the "Ambrosian Basilica," having beneath its high altar many highly venerated relics of the martyrs. And an ancient rule[2] of the Catholic Church prohibited, out of reverence thereto, the burial of any persons in such basilicas, only permitting them to be buried in sacristies or chapels attached to the church. And although in special cases persons of importance were allowed to be buried in *the vault* below the church, none so interred were permitted to have a tombstone in the church, but their tombstones were required to be placed in the vault. There are consequently no tombstones in the pavement of the nave of San Lorenzo, except one. This solitary exception is in the case of Cosimo Pater Patriae. Migliore, in his interesting old book entitled *Firenze Città Nobilissima* (1684), in describing the church of San Lorenzo, gives the following account of this matter:—

"And here is to be seen maintained a most

[1] Chap. iii. p. 53. [2] *See* below.

laudable disposition of the Canons of the Church, especially at the Council of Bragarense, held in Portugal under Giovanni III.; which is, not to allow the burial of the dead in the Basiliche, out of reverence to the relics of the blessed martyrs. And in accordance with this disposition you find at the foot of the altar, in the middle of the pavement, placed to the memory of Cosimo Padre della Patria, the marble memorial in a circle of serpentine and porphyry, with the arms of the Medici at the four sides. But the body is not in the place which is thus represented, but is placed beneath in the vault with all the other personages buried in that church, without any description of them in the pavement above them. This was as a sign of the difference which ought to be maintained between them and him who was like a founder of this church; also as a man who, much separated from the crowd, had no equal in those happy times, when the fame of worthy persons travelled upon the wings of fortune; so that one who well knew his qualities sums up all by saying 'Vir potens, famosus in toto mundo' ('a man most able, famous in all the world'); 'none,' added Il Volaterrano, 'in public affairs of such capacity, nor in learning, wisdom, and knowledge his equal.'"

After dilating on all that Cosimo did for the Republic and for Italy, the account concludes by saying:—

"After his death the Republic conferred on him the honourable title of Pater Patriae, never before conferred on any one in that Republic, and rarely even in that of Rome; and this was accompanied by extraordinary pomp, at the sole cost of the Republic, in transferring his body to this

Sepulchre, which brought to mind that given to Fabius Maximus."

And if we penetrate into the vault below, we find in what a peculiar way this special honour to Cosimo was carried out. Evidently the Florentines were determined to do nothing by halves in the matter. For instead of finding, as we should have expected, a sarcophagus with Cosimo's name on it placed in the vault underneath the memorial slab in the pavement of the church, we find immediately below the porphyry slab a large square pillar, of about eight feet on each side, extending right up to the floor of the church above, and having on it only the Medici arms and one short Latin inscription of five words simply stating that "Piero has placed this to the memory of his father." This pillar is Cosimo's tomb; his own name does not appear on it at all; *that* is borne by the porphyry slab above, the whole being thus joined together in one monument. It was an honour never, then or afterwards, accorded to any one else in Florence; and thus is Cosimo after all in reality buried in front of the high altar of San Lorenzo.

An immense amount has been written on Cosimo's character, and as usual in the case of the Medici the most violently opposite views have been enunciated. Those with whom the name of Medici overthrows all balance can see in him no virtues. Thus even a comparatively temperate writer like Symonds (who is far surpassed by others on that side) calls Cosimo "a cynical, self-seeking *bourgeois*

tyrant." But Symonds would have found it hard to substantiate his string of epithets out of the facts of Cosimo's life.[1] Other writers declare that every seeming virtue in Cosimo was assumed for some unworthy end. But there are many facts of Cosimo's life which decline to accord with this assertion. Nor had it been true could Marsilio Ficino have written:—"I owe to Plato much, to Cosimo no less; he realised for me the virtues of which Plato gave me the conception." Symonds and other writers accuse Cosimo of having undermined the liberties of Florence.[2] But the changes introduced by him into the form of the constitution were few and unimportant. The truth was that Florence, notwithstanding her republican forms, had never really possessed freedom, and that the people, wearied of perpetual dissensions, strife, banishments, and the losses which these entailed, welcomed the stable and efficient government which Cosimo gave them. Had it not been so, his rule, resting solely on popularity, would promptly have been terminated.

There was, however, in Florentine politics a Medicean party and an anti-Medicean party. And the latter put forward assertions (quite regardless of whether these had any solid basis) which in later times have formed the ground of unbalanced judgments and exaggerated statements which have been repeated by one writer after another as though they expressed the acknowledged verdict of history.

[1] Burckhart, referring to Symonds' sneer at Cosimo for being "*bourgeois*," remarks:—"A man of Cosimo's position—a great merchant and party leader, the first of Italians by culture, who also had on his side all the thinkers, writers, and investigators,—such a man was to all intents and purposes already a prince."

[2] Symonds ii. 168.

And at the hands of such writers Cosimo has fared ill indeed. His arduous labours for the welfare of the State and people have been declared due solely to personal ambition. The far-sighted statesmanship by which he managed to control for so long a period the destinies of his country, and to guide her affairs with such success, has been declared to have been merely a crafty plan, pursued with the utmost dissimulation, to pave the way towards the destruction of the Republic. Deeds of his done purely for the benefit of the people have been either dismissed as of little importance, or else attributed to "sinister motives." Lastly, even the title placed upon his tomb by his countrymen has been represented as "a mere empty compliment"; though compliments are seldom thought necessary when the person no longer survives to hear them.

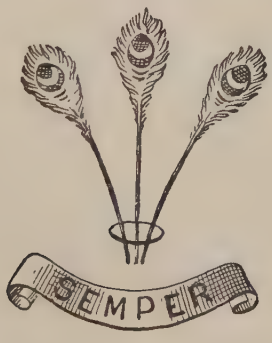
All this, however, involves the assumption that an exceptionally quick-witted race, specially on the watch against attempts to steal away their independence, should in this one instance, and throughout so long a period as thirty years, have displayed a want of discernment at variance with all their history.

Machiavelli's estimate of Cosimo is as follows:—

"He was one of the most prudent of men; grave and courteous and of venerable appearance. His early years were full of trouble, exile, and personal danger, but by the unwearied generosity of his disposition he triumphed over all his enemies and made himself most popular with the people. Though so rich, yet in his mode of living he was always very simple and without ostentation. None of his time had such an intimate knowledge of

government and of State affairs. Hence even in a city so given to change, he retained the Government for thirty years."

"Unwearied generosity of disposition" exactly expresses the general idea which is given us by the facts of Cosimo's life as the most prominent feature of his character. And setting aside all testimony of writers on the one side or the other, the indisputable benefits which he conferred on his country, the end which he put to the faction-fighting which sapped Florence's strength, the prosperity and contentment which he secured for the people, the relief from taxation which he brought about by the effects of his enlightened foreign policy, and lastly, the general character associated with his memory in the minds of the common people of Tuscany, all go to refute the unbalanced judgments which have been referred to, and to corroborate those who have considered that the title engraved by his countrymen upon his tomb was justly deserved, and correctly sums up the leading features of his character and conduct.



Cosimo's private crest; three peacock's feathers, with motto "*Semper.*"

CHAPTER V

THE MEDICI PALACE

BEFORE taking our next step in the history of the Medici let us look at the house in which they lived, and which is inseparably connected with Cosimo, its builder; for it is a notable one.[1] For this is the cradle in which things which now form all the intellectual life of Europe were nursed and nourished in their infancy, and helped to grow.

The Medici in the course of their history occupied three successive palaces in Florence: the first, that which was occupied by Giovanni di Bicci,[2] connected with their rise; the second, this in the Via Larga, connected with all their greatest time in history; the third, that on the south side of the Arno (the Pitti Palace),[3] connected with their decline and end. But it is this second of the three, their home during all the time of their greatest achievements, which must ever have the chief attraction for those who study their history.

A world of interest gathers round this palace. It is interesting architecturally, as the first to

[1] Plate V.
[2] *See* chap. iii. p. 30.
[3] Now the Royal Palace in Florence.

THE MEDICI PALACE.

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be constructed of all the Renaissance palaces of Florence; it is interesting, historically, from the many important events with which it is associated; and, lastly, it is deeply interesting on account of its connection with Learning and Art.[1]

As regards its architectural interest, the first thing noticeable about it is its date (1430), and its extraordinary advance, in style, spaciousness, and general arrangements, beyond all palaces of like date in France, England, or Germany. We look at it when it has been standing four hundred and seventy-five years, and yet do not find it jar on us by any appearance of inferiority of style, or meanness of proportions. Thus we are apt to forget that it was built when the battle of Agincourt had only been fought fifteen years, when the Wars of the Roses had not yet begun, and when Henry VI. was only eight years old. But let it be compared with anything of the kind elsewhere of the same date, and it will be realised how far in advance this handsome, spacious, and commodious palace, erected by the Medici for themselves in 1430, was beyond even kings' palaces of that date in England, France, or Germany.

It is built in three orders of architecture, the peculiar style called "Rustica" on the ground

[1] It is now the official residence of the Prefect of Florence. But in view of its importance architecturally, historically, and in connection with the culture of the Renaissance it would add greatly to the memorials of Florence if some successful effort could be made by those Florentines who take so much public-spirited interest in the memorials of their city to rescue it from its present condition of a public office. No single building could be so just a focus of the sentiment which takes pride in the Renaissance. And, as the first of all museums of Art, it might well be converted into a museum connected specially with the age of Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo; of which time it still possesses one unique treasure in the chapel on its first floor.

floor, Doric on the second storey, and Corinthian on the third. The "Rustica" style, with its grand roughly-hewn stones, a style of construction which afterwards became so fashionable, was first employed in the building of this palace. We are told that Michelozzo adopted it, "because it united an appearance of solidity and strength with the light and shadow so essential to beauty under the glare of an Italian sun." It was exceedingly expensive, and was the principal cause of the new palace being spoken of as "too grand for an ordinary citizen." The corner of the ground floor towards the Via de' Gori[1] was originally an open *loggia*. The windows of the upper storeys are divided by elegant little columns, with, carved above them, Cosimo's own special device of the three feathers, and the arms of the Medici, the *palle* (or balls).[2] On the corner of the palace is the celebrated *fanale*, one of the most perfect specimens of the well-known iron lamps made by Niccolò Caparra, and only permitted on the palaces of the most distinguished citizens.[3] The solid character of the ground floor is in accordance with the requirements of the time. In that age the

[1] That which faces us in the picture. The arches of this *loggia* were afterwards filled in by Michelangelo, who here first invented the particular pattern of curved barred windows often seen in Florence, which he called "*inginocchiate*" (kneeling), though these have since been changed for the more ordinary pattern. The iron rings seen along the lower storey were for holding banners and torches, and for tying up horses. And the stone seats were for retainers who might have to wait outside, and as a convenience to the people generally.

[2] Here the number of balls, which had previously been eight, is for the first time reduced to seven, the number always used by Cosimo (*see* chap. vi. p. 185).

[3] These lamps are nowadays often spoken of as "Strozzi lamps," because the Strozzi Palace bears one, but that on the, much older, Medici Palace is considered by connoisseurs to be more perfect in its design, and the best specimen in existence.

home of an important family had to be a fortress no less than a palace, and the ground floor of a Florentine palace was built as solidly as the Bastile, all decoration being reserved for the upper floors. The entrance door of such palaces led, through an arched vestibule, into an open *cortile* (or court-yard), round which the four sides of the palace were built, with a fine marble staircase leading up from the *cortile* to the handsome rooms on the first floor.

This palace was deliberately intended by Cosimo to be a model of Renaissance architecture. It, of course, far surpassed when built any of the other palaces at that time in Florence, or in Italy. And it is remarkable that though it was the first of the kind, and though it was succeeded by numerous others, many of them of such excellence,[1] it still remains unsurpassed by any of them; the worthy leader of all the great palaces of Florence. Professor Banister Fletcher, in his *History of Architecture*, takes this palace as the best example of Renaissance architecture as applied to palaces; while he also notes that it gives us both the first and the finest example of two things in particular, "the solid *rustica* masonry, and the bold and massive cornice (eight feet in height) which crowns the structure, and considerably aids its impressive effect."[2]

[1] The well-known Strozzi Palace, for instance, probably the finest of these, was not built until sixty years after the Medici Palace. The Pitti Palace (built by the Medici still later) is, of course, much larger, but it is not so perfect in its architecture as this palace.

[2] In length it is about 300 feet, in depth 150 feet, and in height 90 feet. Nearly one-third of this length (at the end furthest from us in the picture) was added by the Riccardi family when, about two

Interesting, however, as this palace is architecturally, it is still more so as the centre of so much history from the middle of the fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century. This was the home of the Medici during a hundred years, from the time of Cosimo Pater Patriae until in 1539 Cosimo I. (the first Grand Duke) moved to the Palazzo Vecchio preparatory to occupying the new and larger palace which he constructed on the other side of the Arno.[1] It was thus their home throughout all their greatest time. Here have been entertained emperors, popes, kings, princes, and most of the distinguished men of that period. Here Cosimo Pater Patriae passed his strenuous years so full of varied labours; here Lorenzo the Magnificent gathered round him his brilliant intellectual *coterie*; here the future Pope Leo X. was brought up; here his cousin, afterwards Pope Clement VII., devised his deep-laid schemes for the advancement of the family; here Catherine de' Medici was born, and lived as a girl. And here nearly all the most prominent events in Florence's history during her most important period have taken place.[2] Not many palaces in Europe have given hospitality to so many notable persons as have passed through the entrance doorway of this home of the Medici. Migliore

hundred and thirty years afterwards, they bought the palace (vol. ii. p. 449). When sold to them it was made a condition of the sale that any additions they might make should be of the same style and design as the main portion of the palace.

[1] The Pitti Palace. It is strange that this latter, built by the Medici, and their residence for two hundred years, is given a name which it never bore in their time (*see* vol. ii. p. 253, footnote), and that neither of the palaces built and inhabited by the Medici through three centuries bears their name.

[2] Excepting those connected with Savonarola.

says that owing to the number and high rank of those entertained there, the Medici Palace was called "the Hotel of the Princes of the whole world."[1] It is now known as the Riccardi Palace, having been, long subsequently, bought from the State by that family; but now that it has again passed into the possession of the State it might well be called by its own name.[2] Though now so little thought of, it is one of the most important buildings in Florence, and should have that importance duly marked.

Greater still, however, is the interest attaching to this palace from the point of view of Learning and Art. The inscription which it still bears[3] designates it as "the nurse of all learning"; and justly so, for it was here that the ancient learning of Greece and Rome was called back to life, and it was from hence that the "New Learning" went forth to change the face of Europe. Entering by the central doorway, and passing through the arched vestibule, one finds oneself in the *cortile*.[4] This court was once adorned with various celebrated statues, among them Donatello's bronze statue of *David* which worked so important an effect in the world of Art; while we still see over the arches his medallions. And here, all round under the arcades, are classical busts, inscriptions, and sarcophagi,[5] recalling the time when the

[1] *Firenze Città Nobillissima,* by Migliore (1684).

[2] It was sold to the Riccardi family in 1659, but re-bought by the State about a hundred years afterwards.

[3] Put up long after the Medici had passed away.

[4] Plate VI. Beyond the *cortile* there was originally a garden, in the space between the back of the palace and the Via de' Ginori.

[5] One of these ancient Roman sarcophagi formerly contained the remains of Guccio de' Medici, who was Gonfaloniere in 1299 (*see* Appendix II.).

enthusiasm for the ancient learning burnt so strongly here; that time when Marsilio Ficino, the great scholar whom Cosimo treated almost as a son, kept a lamp burning before the bust of Plato as before an altar.

Here also Art was reverenced and encouraged to a scarcely less degree than Learning. The number of objects of art which the Medici collected round them in this palace was extraordinary. A glimpse of it is given us in the remark made by the Duke of Milan in 1471 that he had not seen in all Italy so many objects of art as he saw in this palace.[1] Yet this was before Lorenzo the Magnificent added thereto all the immense collection made by him during his twenty-three years' rule, by which he at least doubled all that had been collected by his father and grandfather. The whole of this great accumulation of art treasures was lost when the palace was sacked by the mob in 1494;[2] while the same plundering of all the art treasures collected in the meantime happened again in 1527.[3] It shows, therefore, what profuse art collectors the Medici were when we find that though all was thus twice over swept away the galleries and museums of Florence still contain paintings, statues, bronzes, gems, and other objects of art, almost all of them collected by the Medici, sufficient to surpass any other collection of such things in Europe.

This passion for collecting objects of art on the most lavish scale was permanent in this family through all changes, and from their rise right down

[1] Chap. viii. p. 218.

[2] Chap. x. p. 320.

[3] Chap. xvi. p. 458.

CORTILE OF THE MEDICI PALACE.

Alinari]

to their end; no differences of character seemed to make any difference in this; and whether they were public-minded statesmen like Cosimo Pater Patriae, or luxurious Popes like Leo X., or iron-handed tyrants like Cosimo I., or incapable occupiers of a tottering throne like the last two Grand Dukes, there is not one of them in the whole three hundred and forty-three years of their course who does not show this strong family characteristic.

In the now deserted court of the palace of the Medici there is to be seen a long Latin inscription which runs as follows. After calling on the traveller to pause and note that this was once the celebrated house of the Medici (*Mediceas olim aedes*), and that here a long list of emperors, kings, popes, and other exalted personages have been entertained, it continues thus:—

"TRAVELLER."

"Once the house of the Medici. In which not alone so many great men, but Knowledge herself had her home. The house which was the nurse of all learning; which here revived again. Renowned also for its cultured magnificence, a treasury of antiquity and the arts."

The homes of departed glory are few over which a prouder epitaph could be placed.

And it is in this connection that we may trace the origin of that unique appreciation of Art which the Medici as a family possessed; that second sphere in which they were as notable, though in a different way, as they were in regard to Learning. For

they give us an example on a wide scale of the connection between these two things.

All who feel the spirit of Art know that technical excellence is not the chief thing: that there must also be the expression of some thought, some creation of the artist's brain. We see that pictures or statues which lack this, and rely solely on excellence of technique, though they may gain a certain degree of eminence, never obtain the highest and most lasting fame. Hence it is that it has been said of technical criticism that it "can only show us the things that are of minor consequence."

If, then, the real value of a picture lies in the thoughts that it expresses, it is evident that the more knowledge we possess, the more likely we are to be able to read those thoughts and so to appreciate the picture. And this, true everywhere, is doubly so in the case of the great masters of the classic age of Painting, who were many-sided men, learned in many subjects. Ruskin, after long study of an important fresco picture by one of these masters, remarked that he stood amazed at the mass of varied knowledge, in history, science, theology, and other subjects, displayed by the artist; and that, as he realised how much it surpassed his own knowledge on the subjects concerned, and marked that this mass of knowledge on the part of the artist was joined also to perfect drawing and colouring, he felt that he "stood indeed in the presence of a master."

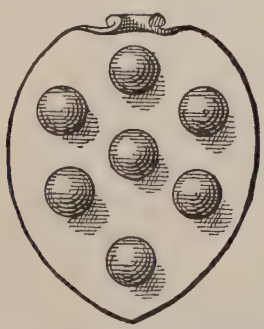
Every picture, in fact (except those belonging to the time of Art's decadence) has *something to say*. Lord Lindsay calls the efforts of the earliest masters, "The burning messages of prophecy

uttered by the stammering lips of infants."[1] And whether the execution be crude or not, the true pleasure in Art lies in looking through and beyond it, and deciphering that "burning message," if such be there. Art, therefore, is a universal language; and one in which the artist opens to us a world of high and deep thoughts of which we had before no conception.[2] Thus Learning and Art go hand in hand. For without Learning Art has nothing to say. And Art that has nothing to say will never long hold the attention of mankind.

As, then, we stand in the deserted court of the palace which was "the nurse of all Learning," we can understand how natural it was that the learning of the Medici should lead them to become the greatest patrons of Art that the world has ever seen.

[1] Lord Lindsay's *Sketches of the History of Christian Art.*

[2] Perhaps the finest example of this which Art can show is to be seen in Raphael's fresco pictures in the *Camera della Segnatura* in the Vatican (*see* chap. xi. pp. 376-377).



The Medici arms in the time of Cosimo (seven balls).

CHAPTER VI

PIERO, IL GOTTOSO

Born 1416. (*Ruled* 1464-1469.) *Died* 1469.

Piero il Gottoso[1] has failed to receive from history the notice that he deserves. He is generally passed over by historians either with no mention at all, or else with merely a few disparaging remarks referring to his physical infirmities. It will be seen, however, that his history and character merit no little attention.

Upon the death of his father, Cosimo Pater Patriae, Piero, then forty-eight years old, succeeded to the headship of the family, and the rule of Florence. From his very boyhood he had been afflicted with gout, and was early in life given the name of "Il Gottoso" (the gouty), by which he is always known. His constant ill health handicapped him greatly throughout life, often making him unable for long periods to take any active part in public affairs, and forcing him instead to devote himself to the retired life of the scholar, while his younger brother, Giovanni, was practically given his place, became his father's favourite, and was looked upon by all as the future head of the family. And the first indication that we get of Piero's character is the fact that we never hear, during all the thirty years that he had to bear this, of any sign of resentment on his part,

[1] Plate VII.

PIERO IL GOTTOSO.
Bust by Mino da Fiesole.

Alinari] [*Bargello Museum.*

either towards his father or brother, on this account. Yet he possessed a full measure of the ability of the Medici family, as he both then and afterwards showed. For not only was he recognised as a powerful scholar, but also we find him sent on several occasions during Cosimo's lifetime on various embassies to Venice, to Milan, and to France, and highly thought of by those to whom he was thus sent; and none were more acute judges of character and ability than Doge Francesco Foscari, Duke Francesco Sforza of Milan, and King Louis XI. of France. Moreover, in connection with these embassies the character and ability of Piero il Gottoso have received a very unique testimony, one borne to this day by the Medici coat-of-arms. For so high an opinion did Louis XI. form of Piero's abilities that he conferred on him, on his becoming head of the family, the very special honour of permission to stamp the lilies of France on one of the balls of the Medici arms, that ball being coloured blue for this purpose. And from this time forward the Medici arms have one blue ball with the French lily (quite different in shape from the Florentine lily[1]) upon it; which thus remains a permanent record of the high estimation gained, in a country outside his own, by Piero il Gottoso.

We do not find that his constant ill health soured Piero's disposition; in every act of his life he showed a disposition the reverse of an ill-tempered one, even though his conduct of business and public affairs had more often than not

[1] Both of them represent the iris, but whereas the French one has only the leaves, the Florentine one has both the leaves and the flowers (*see* p. 12).

to be performed from a sick man's couch; while various writers mention that one of his special characteristics was an intense hatred of all quarrels.

But there is a third indication of his character which is more striking. In his case alone we have none of that conflict of opinion among rival historians, giving the most opposite views of character and motives, which has been alluded to as so common throughout the history of this family. Even those most bitterly biassed against the whole race of Medici have nothing to say against Piero il Gottoso; he is the one solitary head of this family throughout their whole history in whose case this feature is absent.

Before considering his history it is necessary to note exactly what was the position to which on his father's death he succeeded. One necessarily speaks of it as the rule over the State, but that term is liable to mislead unless we bear in mind the peculiar position. It must not be forgotten that the governing body was the Signoria, with its president, the Gonfaloniere. Piero was not one of this body, and therefore had, theoretically, no official position. But it had gradually come about, as a consequence of the influence which Cosimo had so long wielded, that every measure passed by the Signoria must be agreed to by the head of the Medici family[1] before it could be carried into effect. Thus the head of the Medici family, though, theoretically, no more than a simple citizen of the Republic, did in actual fact bear the rule over the State, and wielded almost complete authority. But it must be remembered that the continuance of that position rested solely

[1] For dates of the heads of the family, *see* Appendix IV.

on two conditions—a constantly maintained demonstration by the person in question of an ability greater than that of his fellow-citizens, and a no less constantly maintained popularity. Let either of these factors fail to continue, and the position at once reverted to the theoretical one, wherein the head of the Medici family was only an ordinary citizen, and as liable as any other to be exiled by the Signoria.

When Piero's brother Giovanni died, Cosimo, seeing that Piero's frail life might terminate any day, had advanced the latter's elder son, Lorenzo, giving him practice in every way possible in public affairs, though he was only fourteen. But Lorenzo had only reached the age of fifteen when his grandfather died. He was, however, capable beyond his years; the greatest attention had from the very first been paid by Piero to the education of his two sons; Landino wrote a whole treatise on the education of the two young Medici; and Piero, as soon as Lorenzo was old enough, had appointed Marsilio Ficino (the celebrated head of the Platonic Academy) to be his tutor. When, therefore, Piero became head of the family, he continued the course which Cosimo had begun to adopt, and while he retained foreign affairs in his own hands, left home politics largely in the hands of his capable young son.

For thirty years there had been no further attempts to oust the Medici from that position of power in Florence to which they had attained. Now, however, the attempt was again to be made to get rid of them. A large party of all those

jealous of the position this family had come to occupy, saw in the feeble health of Piero and the extreme youth of his eldest son an opportunity for effecting this, and began to stir up a movement against the Medici which was headed by Luca Pitti, assisted by such prominent men as Agnolo Acciajoli, Niccolò Soderini, and even Dietisalvi Neroni, who had been Cosimo's most trusted adviser, and on whom he had specially advised Piero to lean. And since those concerned knew that, owing to the popularity of the Medici, the lower classes of the people would not permit any regular process for their exile, the above movement soon grew into plans for a formidable rebellion by force of arms. The objects which the conspirators set before themselves were the death of Piero and the banishment of the family. The plots for this were being carried on all through 1465 and the first half of 1466.[1] Piero appears to have known that something was going on, but with his habitual dislike of intrigues and quarrels chose to ignore it, and was apparently right in feeling that if it came to a head he had in himself the abilities to defeat it. He knew Luca Pitti's character as a vain but incapable man, and that the others relied too much on the results of his own bad health. Also for some time the conspirators could not agree as to their plan of action. So that for the first two years of Piero's rule no overt action took place.

[1] During this period, and while Piero was still in ignorance of Dietisalvi Neroni's real character, and following the counsel of Cosimo made him his chief adviser, Neroni took every opportunity of trying to lead Piero into measures calculated to undermine his popularity with the people. It was probably partly in order to give this artifice time to work that the rebellion was so long delayed.

Meanwhile, the chief events in other states were as follows:—

Contemporary historical events. 1464-1467.

Pope Pius II. died in the same month as Cosimo Pater Patriae, and was succeeded by Paul II.

In France Louis XI. was introducing a new era. Cold, measured, crafty, and detestable for his many murders and cruelties, especially for the way in which he in many cases lured his victims to their deaths by treachery, he had gained the name of "the universal spider." At the same time he worked an immense change in France which was for her ultimate benefit. He destroyed the power of the nobles, gradually murdering them in turn until he left none who could be formidable, and quenched all elements of independence; but he converted chaos into order, made France into a strong and prosperous kingdom, and was the founder of her absolute monarchy. During the first six years of his reign (1461-1467) he was occupied in the above struggle, until by the end of this period he had for the time crushed the power of the nobles in France.

In 1466 Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, died. Ever since he had gained his throne by Cosimo's assistance he had been a firm friend of the Medici, and the death of this strong ally tended to weaken Piero's position, both as regards foreign affairs and in his own state, as Francesco's son and successor, Galeazzo Sforza, was not so strong a character, nor so surely to be relied upon.

Piero il Gottoso. 1466.

In August 1466 the conspiracy which had been hatching for two years to take Piero's life and destroy the Medici came to a head. The party headed by Luca Pitti assembled their forces in arms a few miles from Florence, and laid plans for seizing Piero, who was lying seriously ill at Careggi. At the same time a force from Ferrara, under Ercole d'Este, Duke Borso's brother, advanced to the frontier to assist them. But the conspirators were completely mistaken in their man; for Piero displayed a resolution and energy extraordinary in one handicapped as he was by severe illness. Getting into a litter, he at once started for Florence; but on the way he had a narrow escape. On this occasion his young son Lorenzo, then seventeen, displayed great coolness in danger, and resource; whereby he saved his father's life. Riding on ahead, he heard of an armed party who were lying in wait for Piero on the ordinary road; with much adroitness he managed to keep their attention occupied while he sent back word to the party who were escorting his father, and caused him to be conveyed by a different route to Florence in safety. Arrived at the Medici Palace, Piero at once set about collecting his adherents, sent to beg the assistance of some Milanese troops who happened to be near the borders of Tuscany, and had soon collected a larger force than his opponents. He marched against them; the conspirators, divided by the vacillations of Luca Pitti and their own dissensions, and confused by Piero's promptness, were unable to fight; their force melted away and dispersed,

and the leaders surrendered.[1] A new Signoria just elected promptly passed a sentence of death upon the ringleaders, Luca Pitti, Dietisalvi Neroni, Niccolò Soderini, and Agnolo Acciajuoli; and certainly never did men more deserve it, especially Neroni, who had throughout acted with the basest ingratitude, treachery, and dissimulation.

And now Piero displayed the best side of his character. He utterly refused to have these men put to death, though it certainly would have been to his advantage not to interfere on their behalf, for two of them, Neroni and Soderini, only used their pardon and liberty to stir up Venice to make war upon him. He pardoned Luca Pitti outright, and by his treatment of him converted him into a friend for life; while the others were simply ordered to quit Florence. Machiavelli says:—"It was due to him (Piero) that his partisans did not stain their hands in the blood of their fellow-citizens."

Thus did Piero put down a formidable rebellion without any bloodshed. And this is probably the only instance in those ages of an armed rebellion which aimed at the death of the ruler being suppressed by him *without the loss of a single life:* and even with the conversion of its principal leader into a permanent friend. This one achievement of Piero il Gottoso is sufficient to demonstrate both his ability and the high qualities of his character, and marks him out as one really fit to rule a State. We are told that when Luca Pitti's rebellion was thus suppressed, the young Lorenzo, commenting to a friend on his

[1] Regarding the pictorial record of this episode, *see* pp. 177-178.

father's action, said: "He only knows how to conquer who knows how to forgive."

It was conduct and qualities such as this, displayed by the earlier generations of the Medici, which helped to raise that family to its high eminence in Florence. And when, sixty years after this, Clarice de' Medici (become by marriage Clarice Strozzi) in her impassioned harangue[1] contrasted the behaviour of her ancestors with that of those then representing the family, and said that it was by magnanimity and clemency that the former had gained the favour of the Florentines, she said no more than the actual truth.

The natural effect of the defeat of such a formidable effort to destroy the family, and especially when so complete a victory was accompanied by such clemency and kindliness, was to make the Medici stronger than ever in their peculiar position in Florence. After this affair their popularity with the people caused the head of the family to become more than ever "a king in all but the name."

Piero il Gottoso. 1467-1469.

The above episode was followed in the next year (1467) by war with Venice. Ever since Cosimo's alliance with Milan, Venice had waited for an opportunity of revenge upon the Medici, and this seemed now to have come. Niccolò Soderini and Dietisalvi Neroni requited Piero for saving their lives by proceeding to Venice, and persuading the Doge and Council to attack him, asserting that there was a large party in Florence ready to take up

[1] *See* chap. xvi. p. 460.

arms against the Medici. The Venetian army, therefore, commanded by the celebrated Bartolommeo Colleoni, was in May 1467 despatched against Florence's territory. Piero's conduct, however, had entirely won over those who had previously been ready to attack the Medici, so that the supposed adherents of Venice in Florence proved non-existent. Piero was also successful in obtaining as his allies both the Duke of Milan and the King of Naples, each of whom sent him some troops. The Florentine army opposed that of Venice in the little state of Imola, where at length a battle was fought in which the Venetian army was defeated. After which, in April 1468, a peace was concluded, as the result of which Florence gained a much coveted addition to her territory, viz., the town of Sarzana and the fortress of Sarzanello. This was followed in August of the same year by a short but very successful campaign, in which Florence, assisted by Naples and Urbino, opposed the Pope and prevented him from seizing upon the small state of Rimini. By these successes Piero still further strengthened the position of his family in Florence.

These various troubles having been overcome, the year 1469, the last year of Piero's life, was one of peace and festivities. His son Lorenzo was now nineteen, and his second son Giuliano fifteen, and in February 1469 these two young Medici organised a splendid tournament which they intended should be the inauguration of a lighter and more festive life than the somewhat sombre one which their

father's ill health and the political troubles of the last few years had made customary. It was held in order to celebrate Lorenzo's betrothal to Clarice Orsini, the Roman bride who had been selected for him by his mother, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, whose letters from Rome to her husband Piero describing the young lady's appearance are still preserved. Clarice Orsini, at this time sixteen, also writes letters to Lorenzo conveying various polite greetings; while she complains to a friend that "Lorenzo is so greatly occupied with this jousting" that he does not find time to write to her often enough. By her anxiety and depression for several days "on account of the tilting," and her relief when she heard it was over without mishap to Lorenzo, we are reminded that a tournament was not merely a splendid show, but that wounds and death were always possible in the course of it.[1] It is evident that Clarice's abilities were not of a very high order, and that her education fell considerably below that customary in the family she was about to enter which she considered so far beneath her own. Even Lucrezia Tornabuoni, while praising the appearance of the girl she had chosen for her son, says that she "is not to be compared with Maria, Lucrezia, and Bianca" (her own daughters).

This tournament, which so fully engaged the young Lorenzo's attention, provided Florence with a more gorgeous spectacle than the city had ever before witnessed, and was the first of those great pageants for which Lorenzo's age afterwards became famous. It was immortalised in one of the two most celebrated poems of the fifteenth century,

[1] Vol. ii. p. 53.

La Giostra di Lorenzo de' Medici,[1] by Luca Pulci. Standing in the Piazza Sta. Croce, where (as a substitute for the fierce battles between the citizens of former days) this exciting scene of mimic warfare took place, how vividly does its fantastic splendour, voluminously described in the writings of the time, rise before our eyes:—the reigning beauty of Florentine society, Lucrezia Donati, who was "Queen of the tournament"; the young scions of the Medici, Pazzi, Pucci, Benci, Rucellai, Vespucci, and other principal families, who were the knights, each knight accompanied by his standard-bearer, heralds, trumpeters, pages, and men-at-arms, all wearing his colours, and arrayed in the most splendid fashion;[2] the extravagant *punctilio*; the grandiloquent compliments; the delight of the vast crowd occupying every roof, balcony, window, and other point of vantage round the piazza; and all lit up by Florentine sunshine in February. The knights first appeared in most magnificent dresses for an imposing procession round the piazza accompanied by every sort of display; after which they changed into their armour for the actual combat. We may gather some idea of the dresses from the description of that of Lorenzo. He "had a diamond in the centre of his shield, and rubies and diamonds in his cap; a velvet surcoat, with a cape of white silk edged with red; and a silk scarf embroidered with roses and pearls. For the actual combat he wore another

[1] This tournament in 1469 was called Lorenzo's; that held in 1475 being called Giuliano's.

[2] We have all these, as well as Lorenzo's own dress, reproduced in Gozzoli's fresco in the chapel of the Medici Palace, painted a few months afterwards (*see* chap. vii.).

surcoat of velvet fringed with gold, with a helmet adorned with three blue feathers. His horse was draped with red and white velvet, embroidered with pearls."[1] The device on his standard was a bay tree, one half dry and dead-looking, and the other half green, with the motto (worked in pearls), *Le temps revient*, symbolising that a time of youth and joy, after the winter of Cosimo's old age and Piero's ill health, was now to supervene. The occasion was considered of sufficient importance for the King of Naples and the Dukes of Ferrara and Milan to present Lorenzo with horses and armour for it. Lorenzo, in his own writings, mentions this tournament, and says:—

"In order to do as others I appointed a tournament in the Piazza Sta. Croce, with great splendour and at great expense, so that it cost me about 10,000 gold florins.[2] Although I was young, and of no great skill, the first prize was awarded to me, namely, a helmet inlaid with silver and surmounted with a figure of Mars."

Giuliano also, though as yet too young to take so prominent a part as his brother, was splendidly arrayed, and this handsome boy of fifteen, in helmet and armour, and mounted on a fine charger, won the admiration of all. Several busts of him in his armour and wearing the dragon-shaped helmet designed for him by Verrocchio, were executed; and it seems most probable that the terra-cotta bust by Antonio Pollajuolo,[3] now in the museum

[1] Armstrong.

[2] Equal to about £50,000 sterling of our present money.

[3] Plate VIII. "It is evidently modelled with the intention of casting in bronze, and the clay has been painted in imitation, either by Antonio himself or subsequently."—(Miss Cruttwell.)

GIULIANO AT FIFTEEN.
By Pollajuolo.

Alinari] [*Bargello Museum.*

of the Bargello, and catalogued as an unknown portrait bust, is in reality one of these busts of Giuliano. Miss Cruttwell, in her work on Antonio Pollajuolo, considers that it was executed at about this date, and says:—"It is probably a portrait of one of the Medici, whose type of face and arrogant bearing it resembles closely." Giuliano is known to have specially patronised Pollajuolo, and in the inventory of the collections in the Medici Palace other works by that artist are recorded as being all in Giuliano's room in the palace. Again there was no other youth of the same age at this period in Florence whose bust in this style would have been likely to be executed by Pollajuolo.[1] But above all it has the well-known lock of hair on the forehead which was so distinguishing a feature of Giuliano's face, and is often mentioned.[2] So that altogether there seems little doubt that we have in this bust of Pollajuolo's a portrait of Giuliano as he was at fifteen. The bust has been greatly damaged,[3] the arms being broken off, as well as the dragon-shaped helmet, leaving only one of the legs of the dragon at one side of the head. But the face, with its "charming boyish frankness," is uninjured, and as Miss Cruttwell says, "seems to fill the room with its buoyant, vivacious life."[4] The details of the armour, representing

[1] The artists Pollajuolo, Verrocchio, and Botticelli worked at this time almost entirely for the Medici.

[2] *See* Mr Armstrong's words (chap. viii. p. 243); also Botticelli's picture of the *Madonna of the Magnificat* (Plate IX).

[3] Possibly in the sack of the Medici Palace in 1494, and just because it represented one of the Medici; or else in the second sack of the palace in 1527, when intensified animosity would naturally connect it with the hated Clement VII., Giuliano's son (*see* chap. XV.).

[4] *Antonio Pollajuolo*, by Miss M. Cruttwell.

Hercules fighting with the serpents and with the Stymphalian bird, are as admirably executed as the portrait itself.

In the following June the marriage of Lorenzo to Clarice Orsini took place. On this occasion of the marriage of their eldest son Piero and his wife Lucrezia gave a magnificent entertainment to all Florence. It was a marriage which gave evidence of how the Medici were advancing in worldly esteem, for the Orsini were one of the greatest families in Italy. But whether the Medici would not have done better for themselves if they had adhered to those Florentine marriages such as they had hitherto made, and which had produced a Cosimo Pater Patriae, a Piero il Gottoso, and a Lorenzo the Magnificent, may well be doubted, looking at the subsequent history.[1] The marriage took place on the 4th June in the family church of San Lorenzo, and the festivities in connection with it were on the most profuse scale, the entire city being feasted by the Medici for three successive days. "Feasting, dancing, and music continued day and night, until one wonders at the endurance of the people. Some idea of the extravagance of the entertainment may be gathered from such a fact as that there were consumed of sweatmeats alone 5,000 pounds."[2] While the populace were thus regaled all Florentine society was entertained at five immense banquets in the Medici Palace.

"At these banquets the loggias and gardens of the palace in the Via Larga were filled to overflowing, separate tables being set out for the young

[1] *See* chap. ix. p. 267.
[2] *Florentine Life during the Renaissance*, by Walter Scaife.

ladies who were the bride's companions, — 'fifty young women with whom to dance,' say the records—and for the older ladies forming Madonna Lucrezia's company. In the same way there were different tables for 'the young men who danced,' and for those of maturer years. The feasting began on the Sunday morning, when the bride—mounted upon the splendid charger presented to Lorenzo by the King of Naples—left the house of the Alessandri in the Borgo San Piero (now Borgo degli Albizzi), and entered her new home followed by a train of nobles, the symbolic olive branch[1] being hoisted at the window to the accompaniment of gay music; and the festivities continued until the Tuesday morning, when she went to hear mass at the church of San Lorenzo, bearing in her hand one of the thousand wedding gifts, 'a little book of Our Lady, most marvellous, written in letters of gold upon blue paper, and with a cover of crystal and silver work.'"[2]

Art. 1464-1469.

But the chief interest of the five years' rule of Piero il Gottoso centres in his prominent connection with the art of the period. He had had greater leisure to pursue the family tastes for Learning and Art than would have been the case had he had better health; and being passionately fond of both, they had for thirty years been the chief interest of his life. A thorough scholar, he was as eager in the collection of rare manuscript books as his father, and made many valuable additions to the Medici Library. Still more important was the unremitting assistance which he gave to Art. Nearly every work of art

[1] The olive branch exposed at the window of a palace denoted a marriage in the family.

[2] *Women of Florence*, by Isidoro del Lungo.

which remains in Florence belonging to Piero's time was executed either for him or at his instigation, including the one solitary work which the Medici Palace still retains, the frescoes round the walls of the chapel.

In 1466 the great sculptor Donatello died, at the age of eighty-one. In accordance with his dying request to be laid close to his life-long friend and patron Cosimo Pater Patriae, he was buried, at the expense of the Medici family, in the crypt of San Lorenzo alongside the tomb of Cosimo, almost the whole city, with every architect, sculptor, and painter in Florence, following his funeral. He was the last of those who had assisted at the outburst in Art at the beginning of the century: Masaccio, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, and Fra Angelico had all passed away; and besides Lippi, who had left Florence and died three years after Donatello, the foremost men in Art now were [1] Luca della Robbia, Leon Battista Alberti, Piero della Francesca, and Benozzo Gozzoli; while another young painter, Sandro Botticelli, was just coming forward.

Luca Della Robbia (2).

Luca della Robbia is another of those who struck out a special line in Art entirely his own. His chief work in marble, the *Cantoria*, and his other works in marble and bronze, have already been noticed. But the works which have given him his special fame are the beautiful bas-reliefs executed by him in glazed terra-cotta (generally white, with a blue background), a method which he gradually perfected and made his own.

[1] For dates of the principal painters and sculptors, showing the time when each flourished and the general course of Art, *see* Appendix V.

Luca della Robbia's object in adopting this method was the invention of a form of art which could be employed for the decoration of churches and other buildings where marble bas-reliefs from their costliness were impossible. It is believed that the sight of some ancient Greek enamelled ware gave Luca della Robbia the idea of using the same method for sculptures in relief. But, however that may be, his actual discovery, made after profound studies in chemistry and innumerable experiments, consisted in covering the clay model with an enamel which is thought to have consisted of the ingredients of glass mixed with oxide of tin. The exact method was kept as a family secret.

But the particular method in which Luca della Robbia's conceptions were given permanence is of far less importance than the works themselves. As the Marchesa Burlamacchi says:—

"The joy of life, the sadness of life, the grief of the Madonna, the innocence of childhood, the love of mother for child and of child for mother, the great central lessons of the Redemption, angelic sympathy, all these Luca della Robbia has depicted with a perfection which no other artist has ever surpassed."[1]

His date also is an important item in our appreciation of his genius. Looking at his works one can scarcely realise that he was born in the same year as Masaccio, and long before all that great army of painters who followed in the latter half of the fifteenth century. Yet it is not too

[1] *Luca della Robbia*, by the Marchesa Burlamacchi.

much to say that for beauty of expression in the faces of his Madonnas, of his angels, and of his children (including the representations of the Child Christ), it is not until we reach Raphael, born eighty years after him, that we find a painter able to equal him in these respects, while even Raphael does not in these points surpass him. Regarding his relief of the Madonna and Child, with two angels, in a curved lunette (now in the museum of the Bargello), Mr Allan Marquand, after remarking that there is much of Raphael's manner in the bearing of the Madonna, draws attention to her eyes, and says:—"Luca's ideal of the Madonna was evidently a woman with blue eyes, while to the Child Christ he gives hazel eyes." And in the relief of the Madonna and Child in the Foundling Hospital (in which the Child holds a scroll with the words, "*Ego sum lux mundi*," and the Madonna's hand rests on the inscription, "*Quia respexit Dominus humilitatem ancille suæ*"), Mr Marquand draws attention to "the eyes marked in lilac, the hairy eyebrows, lilac upper eyelashes and pupils, and a light shade of lilac in place of the usual greyish blue for the iris of the eye." In the relief of the Madonna and Child, with three cherub heads, in an arched niche (now in the museum of the Bargello), the heads of the cherubs are specially beautiful; while his altar-piece in the church of the Impruneta, near Florence, is considered to contain one of the most beautiful figures of St John the Baptist ever executed.

Luca della Robbia lived to the age of eighty-one, dying in 1482.

Alberti.

Leon Battista Alberti was one of those men of varied genius which the Renaissance so often produced. Nominally he was an architect, and also a painter, but really and chiefly an authority on Art in all its branches. He occupies a similar position in his age to that occupied by Leonardo da Vinci fifty years later, and it was as a universally accepted authority on Art in general, and not for any works of his own, that Alberti gained his fame. Vasari, in speaking of him, enlarges on how necessary learning is to an artist, and speaks of the great aid which Alberti gave to Art by his writings, saying that "such is the force of his writings that he exercised far greater influence by them over Art than many who surpassed him by their works." Alberti was exceedingly versatile; he studied architecture, painting, perspective, sculpture, and Latin; he wrote two treatises on painting, one on architecture, and one on sculpture; he invented a celebrated perspective glass; and Vasari says "was expert in all physical exercises, and in all the accomplishments of a gentleman." Alberti was a Florentine; but he belonged to the party of the *fuori usciti*, or permanent exiles, and spent very little of his life in Florence. He died in Rome in 1472, at the age of sixty-seven.

Piero della Francesca.

Piero della Francesca, though he worked first at Florence and learnt his art there, especially studying Masaccio's frescoes, did not belong to Florence itself, but to the small town of Borgo San Sepolcro, which had become part of Florence's territory in 1441. His great

work for Art was the final discovery of the true laws of perspective, that subject on which so many brains in the world of Art had long been busy, and which was the last of the secrets of the technique of Painting to be discovered. In this achievement he must be coupled to some extent with Paolo Uccello, and with Alberti; and he really took up and carried on Alberti's ideas. It was arrived at by being worked out from a mathematical basis, and not from any of the empirical methods which had been tried by many artists in succession. Piero della Francesca's chief work was his *Treatise on Perspective*, dedicated to the Duke of Urbino. The most pleasing of his pictures, the altar-piece now in the Pinacoteca at Perugia, has a long colonnade in perfect perspective.

Piero della Francesca is also notable for two other things: we have in his fresco paintings at Arezzo the first real endeavour to paint historical pictures; and in his portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino (now in the Uffizi Gallery) we have the first regular portraits. In 1469 Piero della Francesca, then sixty-three, was invited to Urbino by the Duke in order to paint them. Duke Federigo's is painted showing the left side of the face in order to conceal the loss of his right eye, which, together with his broken nose, was caused by a severe wound received in a tournament. The likeness, judged by those on coins, is admirable, as also the perspective of the landscape in the distance. These two valuable portraits hung in the palace at Urbino as long as there were any Dukes of Urbino. When in

1634 Vittoria della Rovere,[1] the sole heiress of the last Duke of Urbino, was married to her first cousin, Ferdinand II., she brought as a part of her property these portraits of her ancestor and ancestress, thus bringing them into the art collections of the Medici family. Piero della Francesca died in 1492, at the age of eighty-six.

Benozzo Gozzoli.

Benozzo Gozzoli, pupil of Fra Angelico, is the great illustrative painter of his time. As the teller of a story he is unrivalled. He was a most rapid and indefatigable worker, covering huge spaces with his beautifully executed frescoes in a wonderfully short time. Thus he has left a mass of paintings which are very valuable historically, bringing vividly before us the manners of the time of the earlier Medici.

Like so many others, Gozzoli began as a worker on the bronze doors under Ghiberti. After a time he began to learn painting under Fra Angelico, working as his assistant at Florence and Rome until 1447, when he first began to paint alone.[2] His three chief works are:—

(i) His frescoes in the church of San Agostino at San Gimignano; a great cycle of frescoes representing the life of St Augustine from his boyhood to his death, in seventeen scenes. This huge work took even Gozzoli four years.

(ii) His frescoes in the chapel of the Medici Palace at Florence, which are considered his masterpiece (*see* chap. vii.).

[1] *See* vol. ii. p. 410.

[2] His earliest known work is his series of frescoes in the church of San Francesco at Montefalco, painted in 1452.

(iii) His frescoes in the Campo Santo at Pisa. This was a gigantic work. It occupied Gozzoli fifteen years, and was nothing less than covering with his paintings the whole of the north wall of the Campo Santo—"a task," says Vasari, "immense enough to discourage a whole legion of masters." The scenes represent the whole of the Old Testament history from the time of Noah to that of Solomon, in twenty-three scenes. Gozzoli has introduced into these forest scenery, scenes of the vintage in Tuscany, and much that is interesting in the life of the people; also portraits of many prominent men of the time, members of the Medici family, scholars, painters, and other celebrated men. The execution, however, is very uneven, and he was evidently then getting old. He died at Pisa in 1497, and is buried in the Campo Santo he had beautified.

Botticelli (1).

But besides the foregoing, another young painter, Sandro Botticelli,[1] was at this time beginning to come forward. Botticelli is *par excellence* the painter of the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent, but his first period belongs to that of Piero il Gottoso. One of his prominent characteristics is that, being of an unusually receptive nature, he reflects to a singular degree the prevailing mental atmosphere around him; so much so that when the spirit of the time changes, the spirit and character of his pictures change with it. As a consequence, Botticelli's painting may be divided into four distinct periods, with

[1] His proper name was Sandro Filipepi, the cognomen "Botticelli" being a nickname. The register of the *catasto* tax for 1458 shows that he was born in 1444, not 1446 as often stated.

different styles, due to events which caused marked changes in the life of Florence. These four periods are:—

(I.) The period of the rule of Piero il Gottoso—1464-1469.
(II.) The period of the rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent—1469-1492.
(III.) The time of Savonarola's dominance in Florence—1494-1498.
(IV.) The portion of Botticelli's life after Savonarola's death—1498-1510.

Owing to the close connection which his pictures usually have with the events of the time, there is less difficulty than with other painters in determining their date.

(I.)

Very shortly after he became head of the family in 1464, Piero began to employ Sandro Botticelli, then a young painter of twenty, in whom he recognised great talent. And the modern world which values Botticelli so highly owes gratitude to Piero il Gottoso for the generous help and encouragement by which he enabled the friendless youth to succeed as he did.[1] Nor was Piero il Gottoso alone in this: his highly-cultured wife, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, was at least as much concerned in the matter as her husband; and in the pictures of Botticelli's first period (when he

[1] Up to this time Botticelli had been merely an assistant of Filippo Lippi, to whom he was apprenticed in 1460 when he was sixteen, and whom he accompanied to Prato in 1464, when Lippi proceeded there to finish his frescoes in the cathedral. Returning thence in 1465 Botticelli was soon taken up by Piero il Gottoso, and thenceforth until the latter's death in 1469 was employed almost entirely in his service.

was between twenty and twenty-five), her influence is clearly traceable. By this talented pair of patrons, Botticelli, only five years older than their eldest son, was taken into the Casa Medici, made almost like a son of the house, and kept continually occupied in painting pictures for which they gave him liberal remuneration. And Botticelli throughout his life cherished a deep devotion towards Piero il Gottoso and his wife Lucrezia for the help, affection, and encouragement which he had received from them in his earliest years.

As regards technique, the chief point for which Botticelli is always praised is his beauty of line in drawing. His love of life, dancing movement, and waving drapery is very apparent. Ruskin says:—

"He often appears affected, but would not have been in accord with the spirit of the time if he had not been slightly affected; much studied grace of manner, much formal assertion of scholarship, were a part of the spirit of the time."

But he was gifted with another power greater than his technique. Botticelli was permeated with that spirit which Donatello had taught as the ultimate aim and highest glory of Art.[1] Beginning to paint just two years before Donatello died, Botticelli carried on the latter's message to the world of Art. He is able, if his subject is a religious one, to make a single picture convey a whole sermon;[2] if his subject is a classical myth, to make a single picture bring before our minds the whole spirit of a period;[3] if his subject is

[1] Chap. iv. p. 113.
[2] *See* his *Madonna of the Magnificat*, and his period (III.).
[3] *See* his period (II.).

historical, to cause a single picture to relate the entire history of a long episode.[1] Possessed of such a power, he is naturally very fond of allegorical treatment, and the suggestion of a whole train of thought (often giving the entire meaning of his picture) by some comparatively small detail.[2] Hence, while his poetry of imagination, his human sympathy, religious spirit, and beautiful technique cannot but appeal to all, a mere rapid glance at his pictures will fail to reveal their depth of thought; while many of his most important pictures will not be understood at all without a full knowledge of the history of the period.

All the principal pictures of Botticelli's first period were painted for Piero il Gottoso.[3] Referring to those which still remain at Florence, we have four principal pictures belonging to this period, the *Judith*, the *Madonna of the Magnificat*, the *Adoration of the Magi*, and the *Fortitude*, all of them now in the Uffizi Gallery.

Regarding the charming little picture of *Judith* it is remarked by Ruskin that among all the many pictures on this favourite subject this one by Botticelli is the only one that is true to Judith, and that this will be seen if the Book of Judith is studied. His reasons for this opinion, and his remarks on this picture generally are well worth studying.[4]

[1] *See* his *Adoration of the Magi*, his *Fortitude*, his *Pallas*, and his period (IV.).

[2] As, for instance, the sword in Lorenzo's hands in the *Adoration of the Magi*, the interlaced diamond rings on the dress of the *Pallas*, the medallion in the portrait of *Pietro the Unfortunate*, and similar indications.

[3] Except the *Fortitude*, the commission for which was obtained for Botticelli by him.

[4] *See* Ruskin's *Mornings in Florence*, chap. iii.

In the *Madonna of the Magnificat* we have a picture[1] painted for Piero il Gottoso about the year 1465. The influence of Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the deeply religious poetess, is specially apparent in this case; her spirit breathes throughout the picture, which is like a representation in painting of her poems. It is sometimes called the *Humilitas*, in allusion both to the expression on the Madonna's face as she writes her song of praise, and to the fact that the finger of the Child rests on that word in her song. The left hands of both Child and Mother rest together on a bitten pomegranate, the emblem of the Fall.[2] It has been said of this picture that it "expresses a depth of divine tenderness and a deep spiritual feeling such as no other painter, not even Raphael, has reached."[3] It differs in one notable respect from the many other pictures on the subject of the Madonna and Child which Botticelli painted in his third period, namely, in its keynote. For while the keynote of this picture is humility, that of all those of his third period is foreboding sorrow.

This picture was painted for Piero and his wife Lucrezia at the time when their two sons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, were boys of about sixteen and twelve respectively, *i.e.* the year 1465 or 1466. They are the two boys introduced into the picture as angels who are kneeling before the Madonna and Child, and holding the inkstand and the book in which the Blessed Virgin is writing her song,

[1] Its over-bright colouring is due to its having been much damaged and repainted.

[2] *See* p. 352.

[3] *The Painters of Florence*, by Julia Cartwright (Mrs Ady).

PLATE IX.

PORTION OF PICTURE "THE MADONNA OF THE MAGNIFICAT," WITH FIGURES OF LORENZO AND GIULIANO AS BOYS.

By Botticelli.

Brogi] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

FAMILY GROUP PICTURE, CALLED "THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI."
By Botticelli.

Brogi] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

while a third angel bends over them protectingly, resting one hand on the shoulder of each.[1] Giuliano is the one facing the spectator, with the lock of hair on his forehead; Lorenzo's naturally darker complexion has been intensified in order to throw all the light on Giuliano, the favourite younger son of the mother for whom the picture was painted.

The third picture, the *Adoration of the Magi*,[2] has been given a name which is somewhat misleading, as it is of course a *family group picture*, the religious subject being merely chosen (in accordance with the invariable custom of the time) as a means by which to portray the members of the family concerned. It was painted for Piero il Gottoso, about the beginning of the year 1467, as a votive offering to be placed in the church of Sta. Maria Novella, in thanksgiving for the deliverance of himself and his family from the great danger which had threatened himself with death and his family with ruin by the conspiracy headed by Luca Pitti.[3] Though painted with the above intention it appears doubtful whether this was ever carried out, as after being finished the picture would seem to have been retained by the Medici family, and only to have found its way to Sta. Maria Novella long afterwards (*see* Appendix VI.). In it we are shown the three

[1] Plate IX. [2] Plate X.

[3] This has always been the traditional account handed down. And that account is very remarkably corroborated by the internal evidence of the picture; as is shown below (pp. 177-178). The new theory that it was painted for a certain unknown Giovanni Lami, put forward in Mr Horne's recent work on Botticelli, appears to the present writer impossible, in view both of the historical evidence and the internal testimony of the picture itself (*see* Appendix VI.).

generations of the elder branch of the Medici family up to that time,[1] surrounded by their principal adherents, including also some of the eminent literary men whom they had gathered round them, such as Marsilio Ficino, Cristoforo Landino, the brothers Pulci, and others.[2] Cosimo, Piero, and Giuliano represent the customary three kings, one old, one middle-aged, and one young; Piero having his two sons, one on either side of him. The following members of the family are shown[3]:—

On the left side.

COSIMO PATER PATRIAE (then dead), (*embracing the feet of the Child Christ*).

On the right side.

GIOVANNI[4] (then dead), brother of PIERO IL GOTTOSO (*standing, in dress of black and red, and with very black hair*).

In the centre.

LORENZO, elder son of PIERO, at the age of seventeen (*standing, holding a sword*).

PIERO IL GOTTOSO (*kneeling, with his back to the spectator*).

GIULIANO, younger son of PIERO (*kneeling, in a robe of white and gold*).

This picture is highly interesting, not merely (as usually stated) because it shows us the general appearance of the literary coterie whom the Medici had gathered round them, but because it gives the first example of that power which

[1] Not necessarily in all cases *portraits* of those concerned, but representations of them (*see* Appendix VII.).

[2] The figure in the right-hand corner, wearing a yellow robe and looking towards the spectator, is generally declared to be Botticelli himself, though doubts have been thrown upon this.

[3] Vasari has interchanged the two figures noted as representing Giovanni and Giuliano, and different opinions have been held on the point. It is in reality immaterial to the meaning of the picture which of the two figures represents Giovanni and which Giuliano; and it was no doubt for this reason that Botticelli took no trouble to give portraits in their case.

[4] This figure can scarcely have been intended by Botticelli to represent Giuliano, since the latter was *four years younger than Lorenzo*, whereas this figure is that of an older man.

Botticelli possessed of making a picture relate an important incident in contemporary history. For the picture has a special meaning which has passed hitherto unobserved. In it Botticelli refers to the plot against Piero's life which had just been defeated, and to the manner in which that defeat had been brought about. Allusion has already been made to Botticelli's fondness for allegorical treatment and his habit of giving the clue to the meaning of his picture by some single detail which might at first sight escape notice. And he has done so in this case, though the fact has passed undetected; with the result that the meaning of the picture has entirely failed to be understood.

It is the sword held in Lorenzo's hands which gives the clue to the meaning of the entire picture. Whether because the picture was painted in haste to meet a desire on Piero's part to present his offering while the event on account of which he gave it was still fresh in the minds of all, or simply in order that Botticelli might make his meaning more marked, the latter has palpably made scarcely any attempt to give portraits in the case of either Cosimo, Piero, Giuliano, or Giovanni, and has concentrated all his attention on the figure of Lorenzo, who, in consequence of his conduct on this occasion, had become the hero of the hour in the family. This figure he has evidently drawn with great care, the whole attitude and expression being carefully studied, in order by it to indicate the signification of the whole picture. Botticelli desires to allude to how in this affair Lorenzo by his courage and sagacity

had been the saviour of his father's life, and indirectly of the whole family from ruin. It will be noticed that Lorenzo is the only person among all those in the picture who wears a sword; he is given a remarkably large one, held in both hands, and placed in front of him in a particularly prominent manner, the sword almost obtruding itself on our notice as we look at the picture. And the point is still further brought out by the figure standing next him and pointing at Piero while he looks at Lorenzo, who stands paying no attention to the gay young companions surrounding him, but with his gaze steadily fixed upon his father. Thus does Botticelli make his picture speak, and relate the danger which had threatened Piero's life, and the part which Lorenzo had borne in warding it off.

The fourth picture, the *Fortitude*, is also very interesting, both for its connection with the Medici and the manner in which that connection becomes apparent. For it refers to the same event as that commemorated in the previous picture; but in this case our attention is drawn, not to Lorenzo's conduct on that occasion, but to that of Piero il Gottoso himself.

The first thing noticeable in the picture is that Botticelli, called upon to paint a figure representing Fortitude, produces one quite unlike the usual conception of that subject. Ruskin, in his comments on the picture, remarks on this, and how very different Botticelli's treatment of the subject is from that of all other painters. But there is a reason for this, and although Ruskin was evidently unaware of such a reason (while he

does not show that he even knew the date of the picture or for whom it was painted), yet the key to the meaning of all that he notices in the picture is to be found in the circumstances of the life of Piero il Gottoso. It is, in fact, an allegorical record in painting of the fortitude, energy, and resource which Piero had displayed in the event which was the chief one during his five years' rule, the rebellion of 1466.

This will become apparent if with that knowledge of Piero's history which Ruskin did not possess we look at his remarks on this picture. Speaking of this figure of Fortitude, Ruskin says as follows[1]:—

"What is chiefly notable in her is that you would not, if you had to guess who she was, take her for Fortitude at all. Everybody else's Fortitudes announce themselves clearly and proudly. They have tower-like shields and lion-like helmets, and stand firm astride on their legs, and are confidently ready for all comers. Yes, that is your common Fortitude. Very grand, though common, but not the highest by any means. . . . But Botticelli's Fortitude is no match, it may be, for any that are coming. Worn somewhat, and not a little weary, instead of standing ready for all comers, she is sitting, apparently in reverie, her fingers playing restlessly and idly —nay, I think even nervously — about the hilt of her sword.[2] For her battle is not to begin to-day, nor did it begin yesterday. Many a morn and eve have passed since it began; and now— is this to be the ending day of it? And if this— by what manner of end? That is what Sandro's

[1] Ruskin's *Mornings in Florence*, chap. iii.
[2] It is really a mace.

Fortitude is thinking; and the playing fingers about the sword-hilt would fain let it fall, if it might be; and yet, how swiftly and gladly will they close on it when the far-off trumpet sounds, which she will hear through all her reverie."

These remarks exactly reflect the circumstances, attitude, and conduct of Piero il Gottoso in the trial which came upon him. Thought to be "no match" for those who were preparing to attack him; half absorbed in the "reverie" of a strong disinclination to turn from the pursuits of literature to meet quarrelling and strife; feeling the "battle which did not begin to-day" in the long period of two years during which he had known this plot to be hatching; the sitting posture (instead of the usual standing one), which indicated the crippled state of health that so severely handicapped him; the "worn, and not a little weary" expression caused both by the long ill health he had endured and by disgust at the political intrigues around him, including the ingratitude and deception of Neroni and others; the hatred of strife shown in the fingers that would fain let the weapon in the hands fall; and, lastly, the resolute character underlying all the weariness which was demonstrated by the prompt and effective action taken when the time came,—all these are points which show the true meaning of the picture.

Looking, therefore, at the date when this picture was painted, at the conduct of Piero il Gottoso in the chief event of his five years' rule (conduct which had won him much honour among his fellow-countrymen), and at the character of the

picture, so well brought out in Ruskin's remarks upon it, there can in my opinion be no doubt that it is to Piero's conduct in that event that this picture of Botticelli's relates. And it shows what a master in art criticism Ruskin was, that although, with his customary want of interest in history, he was (as is evident) unaware of the circumstances alluded to by the picture, he should yet have been able so accurately to gauge its spirit.

Piero il Gottoso, when he was dying in December 1469, obtained for Botticelli the commission to paint this picture. The Council of the Mercatanzia had decided to place in their hall six panels representing the virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, Charity, Justice, and Faith, and had given the commission to Piero Pollajuolo. But Piero il Gottoso, working through Tommaso Soderini, an influential member of the Mercatanzia, got the latter to give the commission for one of the figures, that of Fortitude, to Botticelli. The latter painted the picture during the early months of the year 1470, just when he was in deep grief for the death of the kind and generous patron who had done everything for him, and one of whose last acts had been to get him this commission; and with his marvellous talent for allegorical design he contrives to give to his picture of Fortitude for the council hall of the Mercatanzia those characteristics which would make it also a remarkable memorial of the character of Piero il Gottoso.

To the above four pictures must also be added Botticelli's portrait of Lucrezia Tornabuoni,[1] now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin, probably

[1] Plate XI.

the most beautiful portrait up to that time painted, and his picture of St Sebastian, also now at Berlin.[1] The above were Botticelli's chief pictures during the period that he worked for Piero il Gottoso and Lucrezia Tornabuoni, both of whom he held in highest honour. His second period is best considered in connection with Lorenzo the Magnificent (chapters viii. and ix.).

Piero il Gottoso. 1469.

Shortly before his death various of his most ardent adherents among the citizens gave Piero il Gottoso considerable trouble. They seem to have been carried away by elation at his uniform success and at the triumph of their party over all who had wished ill to him and his, and, Machiavelli says, gave themselves up to tyrannising over their fellow-citizens and to committing all sorts of excesses. Piero, though he was on his death-bed and unable to move hands or feet, took vigorous action to quell this spirit among his followers. He summoned the most prominent of the offenders to his bedside and gave them a most severe rebuke, promising them that if they did not abandon their course of conduct he would make them repent it, and in order to check the excesses of his own party would take the extreme step of recalling some of their exiled opponents. Nor was this an empty threat; for when he found that, thinking him too ill to interfere, they continued in the same course, he had a secret meeting at his villa of Cafaggiolo with

[1] Vasari says that the St Sebastian was painted some three or four years later for Lorenzo the Magnificent, but it is considered more probable that it was painted during this period.

Agnolo Acciajoli, the principal of the exiles, with a view to carrying out what he had said. And had he lived there is no doubt that he would have done it.

But his course was run. He died in December 1469, universally regretted by all the best of his countrymen, who rejoiced in his temperate and sympathetic method of ruling. The life which had been a threatened one ever since he was a boy, and which had seldom known a day's real health, nevertheless reached the age of fifty-three. Regarding his character there is no dispute; even Machiavelli, who was not the sort of man to appreciate its nobler side, describes him thus:—

"He was a good man. He hated violence and display. His goodness and virtues were not duly appreciated by his country, principally because the few years that he survived his father, Cosimo, were largely occupied by civil discord and constant ill health. He promptly and firmly put down an attempted rebellion against him without any violence, which he detested, and managed to turn his enemies into friends. He took little interest in home politics and faction, but paid unfailing attention to foreign politics, and was better appreciated at foreign courts than in his own city."

When we consider his energy notwithstanding that he was so crippled with gout as to be often unable to move hands or feet, hatred of dissensions and violence, contempt for the intrigues which made up so large a part of the political life of Florence in his time, the combination of vigour, sense, and tact with which he suppressed a formid-

able rebellion and dealt with unruly adherents, and, lastly, the clemency he showed to those who had endeavoured to take his life, we have apparently just reason to say that Piero il Gottoso had a fine character, and one which adds not a little to his family's reputation. While it is fully evident from subsequent events that strong as was the position to which Cosimo had raised the family, that strength was increased (and by the most worthy methods) by Piero il Gottoso, even though he had so few years in which to do it.

Piero was buried in the Old Sacristy in San Lorenzo, in the same tomb as his brother Giovanni; and over it his sons placed the graceful monument by Verrocchio already mentioned. It has an inscription round the base saying that his sons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, have erected this tomb to their father and uncle.[1]

Instead of a painted portrait, such having as yet barely come into vogue,[2] Piero, like his brother Giovanni, had a portrait bust of himself executed by Mino da Fiesole, which is now in the museum of the Bargello (Plate VII.). It shows a fine and strong face; and as Mino da Fiesole excelled in these portrait busts, and knew Piero well, it is sure to be a good likeness. These two busts of Piero and Giovanni are the first portraits among those in this book which were done from life.[3]

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[1] One seldom sees this tomb properly as the front of it is towards the chapel of the Madonna, and is often obscured from view by a wooden screen which fills the archway during the winter months.

[2] They were, however, beginning. It was in the year that Piero died that the artist Piero della Francesca painted the portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino; while, as we have seen, Botticelli had painted a portrait of Lucrezia Tornabuoni.

[3] Those of Giovanni di Bicci and Cosimo being both by Bronzino (1512-1572) and taken from older representations of them.

The change in the family arms brought about by Piero has already been noted. The number of the balls in the Medici arms varied during their history. In very early times the number was eleven, then nine, then eight, then seven, and at last six. Thus the number of balls is a rough indication as to date. While Giovanni di Bicci was head of the family we generally find *eight*. When Cosimo became head of the family the number changes to *seven*; and that is the number in the arms on the palace which he built (Plate V.). The colouring of one of the red balls blue, with on it the *fleur-de-lys* (or, if in stone, simply on one of the balls the *fleur-de-lys*), is, of course, not found until the time of Piero; so that six red balls and one blue indicate Piero's time. Lastly, in Lorenzo's time we find the number of balls reduced to *six* (five red and one blue), and at this it finally remained. The rule is absolute so far as our never finding seven balls before the time of Cosimo, or seven balls, one of them bearing the *fleur-de-lys*, before the time of Piero, or six balls before the time of Lorenzo, but there are a few occasions where one may find eight balls even in the time of Cosimo, and seven balls without the *fleur-de-lys* even in the time of Piero.

The Medici were great people for heraldic devices with hidden meanings. Each of them on becoming head of the family adopted a private crest of his own which he used in addition to the family one. Thus Cosimo's crest was three peacock's feathers (intended to signify the three cardinal virtues he most admired, prudence, temperance, and fortitude); they are to be seen, among other

instances, on the trappings of his charger in Gozzoli's fresco in the Medici chapel.[1] Piero chose a falcon holding a diamond ring; but as his time was so short, it is less often met with than the others; it is to be seen on the *lavabo* in the inner part of the Old Sacristy in San Lorenzo. Lorenzo assumed as his crest three (sometimes four) diamond rings interlaced; the diamond, as not yielding to fire or blows, signifying indomitable strength, and the ring, eternity. And certainly nothing was more appropriate to Lorenzo's character than a device symbolising enduring, indomitable strength. His device is to be seen on the dress of the figure representing himself in Botticelli's *Pallas and the Centaur*. All three, Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo, used the motto "Semper." It is to be seen combined with Cosimo's peacock's feathers on the trappings of his charger in Gozzoli's fresco, combined with Piero's falcon and diamond ring on the *lavabo* in the Old Sacristy, and round the ornamental border of the chapel in the Medici Palace. These private crests are important as often assisting to determine the date of various works, especially in conjunction with the diverse number of balls in the family arms already noted.

LUCREZIA TORNABUONI

The wives of Giovanni di Bicci and Cosimo Pater Patriae had not been of any particular note intellectually; in the case of Lucrezia Tornabuoni,[2] the wife of Piero il Gottoso, it was otherwise. She was one of the most accomplished women of that age. She belonged to a family

[1] Chap. vii. [2] Plate XI.

LUCREZIA TORNABUONI, WIFE OF PIERO IL GOTTOSO.
By Botticelli.

Hanfstaengl] [*Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin.*

who were formerly nobles of the name of Tornaquinci, but had changed their name and arms about two hundred years before in order to become ordinary citizens and eligible for the Signoria, and who were notable patrons of Art.[1] She was learned, a poetess, and a deeply religious woman. She distinguished herself not only as a noted patroness of learning, but also by her own writings, and Crescembeni is of opinion that she "excelled the greater part of, not to say all, the poets of her time." Her chief writings were hymns and translations of Holy Scripture in verse. Both Politian and Pulci speak highly of her intellectual gifts; and Roscoe remarks that her poems are the more worthy of praise as being produced at a time when poetry was at its lowest ebb in Italy.

Dr Pastor, in his *Histoire des Papes*, couples her with Cecilia Gonzaga, Isotta Nogarola, Cassandra Fedele, and Antonia Pulci in detailing the most notable ladies of the time who came forth from the seclusion in which women had hitherto shut themselves up, and won for themselves renown in literature and science.[2] Nor was she less notable in the sphere of religion; and Francesco Palermo states that the treatise of St Antonino, entitled *Opera a ben vivere* ("Methods of a good life") was addressed to Lucrezia Tornabuoni.[3] If so, it is high tribute to her devout and sensible character.

All that we hear regarding Lucrezia Torna-

[1] It was this family who shortly afterwards, at Lorenzo's instigation, caused the choir of Sta. Maria Novella to be decorated with Ghirlandajo's well-known frescoes. The principal street in modern Florence preserves their name in memory. Their palace was at the corner where that street is joined by the Via dei Corsi.

[2] *Histoire des Papes*, by Dr Louis Pastor, vol. v. p. 33.

[3] *Opera a ben vivere*, edited by Francesco Palermo (Florence, 1858).

buoni[1] shows her to have been a woman of exceptionally high character as well as thus talented. In her eldest son, Lorenzo, the remarkable abilities of the Medici family reached their culminating point, and this was no doubt due to the fact that not only his father, but also his mother, was so highly gifted. Lucrezia survived her husband thirteen years, and lived to see the terrible death of her beloved younger son in 1478, the war of 1478-1480, and the triumph of her elder son in 1480, dying herself in 1482. And there is no doubt that during the earlier part of his rule Lorenzo owed much to her valuable advice. Niccolò Valori says:—

"Lorenzo was most deferential to her, and after his father's death loved and honoured her, showing in all his actions both the affection felt for a mother and the respect given to a father; it was hard to discern whether he most loved or honoured her."

Lucrezia's portrait (in profile), painted by Botticelli (Plate XI.), shows a beautiful and intellectual face.[2] She and Piero had five children, two sons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, and three daughters, Maria, Lucrezia (or Nannina), and Bianca. Their three daughters all made notable marriages; Maria married Leopetto Rossi, Bianca married Guglielmo de' Pazzi, and Lucrezia married Bernardo Rucellai,

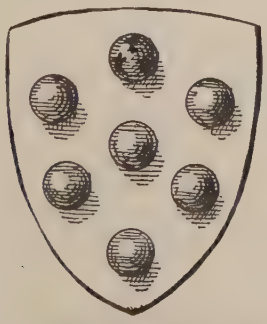
[1] It was the practice of that time, especially among the great families, for a married woman to retain her own family name, instead of changing it for that of her husband; or sometimes to add the latter to the former, as Maria Salviati does in signing herself in her letter, "Maria Salviati de' Medici" (vol. ii. p. 233). The latter method is still the custom in Italy.

[2] It probably found its way to Berlin owing to the plundering of the Medici Palace in 1494.

who was himself one of the most distinguished scholars of the time.

Art and Learning. 1469.

By the end of Piero il Gottoso's life the light which Florence had ignited, and had held aloft in Art and Learning for a hundred and fifty years, had begun to show signs of becoming diffused. In Rome a beginning had been made by the efforts of Pope Nicholas V. In Venice the two brothers, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, and their brother-in-law, Mantegna, were originating a school of painting, destined to become second only to that of Florence. Urbino, under its enlightened Duke, Federigo Montefeltro, was following in the steps of Florence. And both Mantua, under the Gonzaga family, and Ferrara, under the Este family, were beginning to give to Art and Learning a similar encouragement.



The Medici arms in the time of Piero (seven balls, with on one of them the French *fleur-de-lys*).

CHAPTER VII

THE FRESCOES IN THE CHAPEL OF THE MEDICI PALACE

JUST as the Medici Palace is inseparably connected with Cosimo, so is that which in these days chiefly attracts attention to it connected with Piero.

Of all the mass of art treasures which that palace contained in the time of Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo, one alone now remains there, the frescoes painted for Piero il Gottoso on the walls of the little chapel on the first floor by Benozzo Gozzoli. They merit special consideration on the three grounds of their historical interest, their being this painter's masterpiece, and their combining examples of his powers in two different aspects, those on the walls of the chancel being occupied with a religious subject, and those round the body of the chapel with an historical one.

Although a window now exists all authorities state that originally this chapel had no window, and that all these beautiful frescoes were painted by lamplight. If so it increases our admiration of the master's talent. They are still in perfect preserva-

tion, though nearly four hundred and fifty years have passed since they were executed. Over the altar, where the window now is, there was originally a picture of *The Nativity*, by Filippo Lippi.[1] All round the chapel at the lower part of the walls runs an ornamental border consisting of Piero's device of a single diamond ring and the motto "Semper."

The chancel pictures.—These give us an example of Benozzo Gozzoli's powers as a devotional painter, the pupil of Fra Angelico. And although this was not the line in which Gozzoli excelled, these pictures show that he can on occasion breathe into his work not a little of the spirit of his master.

On the two side walls of the chancel, covering the whole height of the wall, Gozzoli gives us two pictures[2] representing the world on that night of the Nativity of Christ referred to in the picture which was over the altar. He lays his scene amidst Italian garden and woodland scenery, with groups of angels passing about everywhere singing their song of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." There are on each wall three groups, one kneeling, another standing, and the third flying; all are turned towards the altar, or rather towards the picture of the Nativity over it.

The kneeling groups (those nearest to that on which the attention of all is concentrated) are, unlike the rest, not singing; they are intently gazing at the great mystery before them of the

[1] It is now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti.
[2] Plate XII., showing one of the two walls.

incarnation in a human body of Him whom they have ever known as the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, that mystery regarding which we are told that "the angels desire to look into it"; and, bowed in awe, are lost in silent wonder and devotion at such transcendent love on the part of God for the human race. The thoughts in their minds are shown in the "glories" round their heads, in which some have the words, "Gloria in excelsis Deo," others "Adoremus," others "Et in terra pax."

The standing groups, a little further back, are occupied in recounting to each other the wonder of this greatest event in the world's history, and, singing loudly, are calling on all to come and see it. The flying groups are hastening up from the distance to see this wonder of God becoming Man, and gazing down at it in adoration.

The spirit of the entire picture may be summed up in the words, "God *so* loved the world"; while it is made all the more impressive by not containing any representation of that at which all are so intently gazing; seeing as we do only its profound impression upon them, our attention is drawn to concentrate itself on the greatness of the deed which can thus impress even the angels. Probably in the very devotional spirit of this picture is to be seen the influence of Lucrezia Tornabuoni, who no doubt had much to say in regard to its design.

Behind the principal groups angels pick roses in the gardens, a little cherub rests placidly in the top of a tree, bright-coloured birds fly or stand without fear among the angels, and all is happiness and peace. The beautiful peacock wings of the

LEFT WALL OF CHANCEL OF THE CHAPEL IN THE MEDICI PALACE.

Fresco by Benozzo Gozzoli.

Brogi]

angels, the brilliant colouring of the birds, the exquisitely painted roses, and other details make the picture as deserving of admiration for its execution as it is for its general design. In accordance with the custom of the old masters, and to exemplify that in the things of the spiritual world time and place are non-existent, the background shows us Italian scenery with castles and villages of the Middle Ages.

The general idea of the picture is carried out even in the landscape, its stiffness and formality being due to this cause. Intending that his picture shall breathe throughout it the thought embodied in the singing angels' words, of *peace* brought to a world tortured by sin and sin's results, the master gives to his landscape such characteristics as shall accord with this idea. Ruskin, in speaking of this point, says[1]:—

"In these sort of pictures by masters such as Raphael, Perugino, or Benozzo Gozzoli, whereas all mountain forms are in nature produced by convulsion or modelled by decay, and all forest grouping is wrought out with varieties of growth, all such appearances are purposely banished. The trees grow straight, equally branched on each side, and of such slight and feathery frame as shows them never to have encountered blight or frost or tempest. The mountains stand up in fantastic pinnacles with no fallen fragments; the seas are always waveless; the skies always calm, crossed only by far, horizontal, lightly-wreathed white clouds."

He cites this picture as an example, and points out how "roses and pomegranates, their leaves

[1] Ruskin's *Modern Painters*.

drawn to the last rib and vein, twine themselves in fair and perfect order about delicate trellises; broad stone pines and tall cypresses overshadow them; bright birds hover here and there in the serene sky; and groups of angels glide and float through the glades of an unentangled forest."

In this manner has Benozzo Gozzoli in these chancel pictures written his "burning message," and in a language which those of every nationality can read.

The pictures in the body of the chapel.—While the chancel pictures are occupied with the first episode connected with the Nativity of Christ, those in the body of the chapel are concerned with the second episode connected therewith, the journey of the three kings, or *magi* (Il Viaggio dei Rè Magi) to Bethlehem.[1] And here we have an example of Benozzo Gozzoli's powers in his own special line, that of an historical painter; the religious subject being made merely a vehicle for references to the history of the Medici.

In doing this Gozzoli would of course desire to introduce as many allusions as possible complimentary to the family; but the manner in which he has done this is remarkable. The picture is from end to end an elaborate memorial pointing to all that the Medici had up to that time done for Florence, and for which they had gained honour among their countrymen. But while the whole idea is wonderfully conceived and worked out, the empty flattery by which many painters of that

[1] Plates XIII., XIV., XV., and XVI. (As the head of the procession is on the right hand, these four plates have to be numbered, and looked at, from right to left.)

"THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI."
Part of fresco round the chapel in the Medici Palace.
By Benozzo Gozzoli.

Alinari]

"THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI."

Part of fresco round the chapel in the Medici Palace.
By Benozzo Gozzoli.

Alinari]

"THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI."

Part of fresco round the chapel in the Medici Palace.

By Benozzo Gozzoli.

Alinari

"THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI."
Part of fresco round the chapel in the Medici Palace.
By Benozzo Gozzoli.

Alinari]

age would have spoilt the effect is avoided. Thus we have in this picture far more than merely a "gorgeous procession of the Magi, into which have been introduced portraits of several of the Medici," which is the description it has generally received.[1]

To carry out the above general idea Gozzoli sets to work to make his picture speak of all that had taken place in Florence in connection with this family during the preceding thirty years. Of how the great gathering of 1439 had been invited to Florence at the instigation of the Medici, and hospitably entertained there by them; of how this assemblage had included an Emperor, the successor of Constantine the Great, and a Patriarch of Constantinople the equal theoretically[2] of the Pope of Rome; of how it had brought to Florence the most learned men of the time, and furthered that revival of the ancient learning which the Medici had, ever since the foundation-stone of this palace was laid, been fostering; of how as a consequence of the hospitality of 1439, learning and culture when driven from Constantinople had taken refuge in Florence; and, lastly, of how the judicious political guidance of the Medici had increased Florence's power and prosperity and advanced her over the heads of other states which had previously been her rivals. Of all this the picture speaks, and the admirable manner in which Gozzoli has worked

[1] Even Ruskin dismisses it with merely a similar remark.

[2] The five great *patriarchates* which embraced all Christendom having been (1) Antioch, (2) Alexandria, (3) Jerusalem, (4) Constantinople, as being the imperial capital, and (5) Rome, "in consequence of its having been the former capital." And "Patriarch" (Chief Father), and "Papa" (Holy Father) being respectively the Greek and Latin forms of the same title and office.

out this general scheme demonstrates his great talent as an historical painter.

Gozzoli selects for the first of his three kings or wise men, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Joseph.[1] This is the Patriarch who had come to Florence for the Council of 1439, and who died there a month before it ended. He is the old man on the mule, of which half the body has been cut off in order to make a new entrance many years ago into the chapel; as though to show how little splendid frescoes like this were valued at the time this act of Vandalism was committed. Although the Pope of Rome (Eugenius IV.) had also been one of the important personages at the Council, Gozzoli in preference to him chooses the Patriarch of Constantinople, both as being an *Eastern* potentate, and also in allusion to those many dealings which the Medici had had with Constantinople in their unearthing of the ancient classical literature.

For the second king[2] Gozzoli chooses John Paleologus (John VII.), the Emperor of the East. This John VII. is the emperor who had come to the Council of 1439, the last emperor but one before by the fall of Constantinople the Eastern half of the Roman Empire came to an end, as the Western half had done a thousand years earlier. As the successor of Constantine the Great (even though his empire had then shrunk to little more than its capital city), he was theoretically the greatest of all earthly sovereigns. And though by the time that this picture was painted his empire had for sixteen years ceased to exist, Gozzoli nevertheless puts him in as the second king for the same

[1] Plate XIII. [2] Plate XIV.

reason as before, namely, because he wishes to point to the Council of 1439, to Florence having been the city to which it was transferred, and to the part which the Medici had had in that transfer, and in giving its members such royal hospitality there.

For the third king Gozzoli takes the young heir of the family, Lorenzo de' Medici.[1] By putting him in as one of the three kings Gozzoli makes the Medici not merely attendants upon the wise men, but "wise men" themselves; and by the exalted company in which he is placed contrives a powerful compliment to the family.

Behind the three kings comes their retinue;[2] and here we find the Medici leading a gathering of all the most learned men of the time. In the front line we have the two brothers, Cosimo Pater Patriae (in an embroidered coat, and on his charger's trappings the Medici arms, with *seven* balls, and his own private crest of the three peacock's feathers), and on his right his brother Lorenzo (typically mounted on a quiet and humble mule); in the left corner Piero il Gottoso (as usual with bare head[3]); and next to him (on the white horse) the young fifteen-year-old Giuliano (preceded by a negro with a bow, in allusion to Giuliano's love of sport). Giuliano's horse (alone) has a jewel on the frontlet of its bridle. In

[1] Plate XV. He had not yet, of course, gained the name of Lorenzo the Magnificent; nor, in fact, was Lorenzo ever called so by his contemporaries, the name being applied to him after his death. Neither in his case, nor in that of any other member of the Medici family, does Gozzoli consider it necessary to give a *portrait* of the person represented. He indicates by the dress and other accessories who is meant (*see* Appendix VII.).

[2] Plate XVI.

[3] Possibly as a distinguishing sign alluding to his being always an invalid. Whether for this reason or not, in no case is Piero il Gottoso ever represented wearing anything on his head.

each case Gozzoli, ignoring likenesses, has devoted much care to the dress and general appearance. And then behind these members of three generations of the Medici family comes a long procession of scholars and *literati*, extending far into the distance, and including both those Florentines whom the Medici had taught to care for and seek after learning[1] (such as Marsilio Ficino, the brothers Pulci, and others), and also those celebrated Greek scholars from Constantinople, whom the Medici had induced to settle in Florence, and to whom they had given appointments as professors of classical learning (such as Argyropoulos, Chalcondylas, and others), or who had come to the Council of 1439 (such as Bessarion, Plethon, and others), and who are distinguished from the Florentines by their Greek head-dresses. The Florentines are all close-shaven, whereas the Greeks, in the Eastern fashion, wear beards. The man on foot (with a black cap), immediately behind Cosimo, is Salviati, a strong adherent of the Medici, and tutor to Giuliano. Amidst the crowd of *literati* Gozzoli has inserted himself (between two of the learned Greeks), and to prevent his name being lost, and also, perhaps, because he might scarcely be expected in such company, has carefully written his name round his cap.

Throughout the whole picture it is learning, and not wealth or power, which is exalted. The Pope of Rome was infinitely more wealthy and

[1] Most of these wear the peculiar cap which we always associate with Cosimo Pater Patriae, as he is always shown wearing it. Probably it either denoted a scholar, or perhaps signified a member of Cosimo's Platonic Academy.

powerful than the Patriarch of Constantinople, and many of the sovereigns of the time than the Emperor of the East; and, again, those who accompany the Medici in the retinue of the three kings are, not the wealthiest Florentines, but the most learned.

In the fore part of the cavalcade,[1] in front of the Patriarch, is introduced a gorgeously apparelled youth on a handsomely caparisoned horse, on the back of which he carries a hunting leopard. This is one of those *scherzi* (or jokes) such as the old masters loved; while it is made at the same time to serve the general object of the picture. The person represented is Castruccio Castracani, Duca di Lucca,[2] a celebrated and terrible commander, and a formidable enemy of Florence, who in the early part of the fourteenth century fought furiously against her, conquered Pisa and Pistoia, devastated Florence's territory, and carried war up to her very walls, and, to the indignation of the Florentines, was nominated by the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria to be imperial governor of Tuscany. Gozzoli's *scherzo* consists in representing this terrible enemy as a mere youthful hunter, excelling only in field sports, and contrasted in every way with the wise and learned Florentines. He is trying to force his prancing horse through a crowd of them, but they pay little attention to him, excepting one, who holds up his hand forbidding him to proceed. In all of which we have allusion to the fact that whereas Lucca had previously been Florence's formidable rival, and

[1] *See* Plate XIII.
[2] A leopard was the crest of his house.

whereas in two wars before the Medici arose Florence, guided by the Albizzi, had been worsted by Lucca, she had now been carried by the Medici to a position of power and importance far beyond that which Lucca possessed, and had entirely put a stop to Lucca's triumphal career.

Thus in this picture we have brought before our minds, in one general view, all that the Medici (up to the point in their career which they had reached in 1469) had achieved in reviving Learning, in advancing the glory of Florence as the most cultured city in Italy, and in advancing her in political power. And what Gozzoli had to say as regards these achievements of the first three generations of the family was rendered in such fashion that it could be read by multitudes who could understand no word of Italian; while his record has proved a lasting one.

The picture possesses much historical interest apart from its allusions to the deeds of the Medici. The portraits and dresses of the Emperor and the Patriarch, the dresses and appointments of the cavalcade, and similar details, are not imaginary. Thirty years before, when he was about twenty, Gozzoli had himself seen the Emperor and the Patriarch in the processions and functions which took place during the summer of 1439; he had also lately seen the no less splendid array of the tournament of February 1469; and he takes his materials from both these, thus reproducing before our eyes persons, dresses, and customs of which we should otherwise have but little idea.

The Patriarch of Constantinople is shown in

the dress he wore in the processions of 1439. On his head he has the ancient head-dress which he was almost the last to wear; and the chief point noticeable about this head-dress is that while his colleague, the Pope of Rome, had gradually altered his until it had grown into the triple crown, that of Constantinople had been kept as it was at the first.

In the portrait of the Emperor John VII. (John Paleologus) we are shown him as he appeared during the processions in 1439. It is highly interesting from the fact that it is probably the sole portrait now existing[1] in the world of any one of all that long line of Emperors, from Constantine the Great downwards, who sat on the throne of Constantinople for eleven hundred and thirty years. His dress and the trappings of his charger are very magnificent. On his head he wears (entwined with his turban) the peculiar crown of the Eastern Emperors of Rome, so different in shape from that which had by that time been adopted by all sovereigns in Western Europe. Unlike the Florentines, he, according to the Eastern fashion, wears a beard. His face is dignified, yet has a melancholy expression; as well it may, as he sees that once glorious empire in its last throes, and knows there is no hope of any assistance coming from the West to save it.

Lorenzo de' Medici's dress is that which he had lately worn at the tournament of February 1469.[2] We note the "rubies and diamonds in his cap," the "velvet embroidered surcoat" (just showing on his arm), and the cape (like a sleeved surplice)

[1] Except those *in mosaic* at Ravenna of the Emperors Justinian and Constantine IV., which are scarcely portraits in the same sense.

[2] *See* chap. vi. p. 159.

"of white silk edged with red," with his sword belt worn over it. He rides the great white charger which had been presented to him by the King of Naples for the tournament, and the trappings of this charger have all over them the seven Medici balls.[1] The mounted pages, heralds, men-at-arms on foot, etc., are also all in the dresses which they wore at Lorenzo's tournament.

The journey of the Magi, always a favourite subject with the old masters on account of its great possibilities for picturesque treatment, has nowhere else been treated on so magnificent a scale. The splendid procession is given every accessory that can add to its picturesque splendour—beautiful youths, gorgeous dresses, fine horses, hunting leopards, greyhounds, falcons, etc.—and winds its way up and down over the rocky paths and wooded slopes of the Apennines, amidst castles, villages, and cypress groves, while all is painted in colours that are almost as fresh as when laid on.

The date of these frescoes is somewhat of a problem. Ruskin states that they were painted between 1457 and 1459; all other authorities say between 1459 and 1463; while both Ruskin and all other authorities say (rightly enough) that they were painted for Piero il Gottoso. The latter, however, did not become head of the family until 1464; while there are also further grounds than this for considering that none of these dates can be correct. In 1457 Lorenzo was a child of only eight years old, and Giuliano only four years old: which makes

[1] Not yet changed to six, because we are still in Piero's time (chap. vi. p. 185).

Ruskin's date at any rate impossible. And even at the latest of the above dates, 1463, Lorenzo was no more than fourteen, and Giuliano only ten: scarcely an age at which fondness for field sports has been developed. Again, all authorities consider that the dresses and appointments of the cavalcade in the procession of the Magi "reproduce the festive pomp and splendour of the pageants of the Medici."[1] Now the earliest of these pageants was that held in February 1469, when Lorenzo was nineteen and Giuliano fifteen; and none can look at the picture with the account of that pageant before him and have any doubt that the tournament of February 1469 formed the model for the dresses and appointments of Lorenzo, the pages, men-at-arms, grooms, and serving men in the picture; while ages of nineteen and fifteen accord with the representation therein of Lorenzo and Giuliano, which ages of fourteen and ten do not. So that the internal evidence of the picture bars all dates earlier than February 1469.

On the other hand, two letters (without date) regarding the work were written to Piero il Gottoso by Gozzoli while employed on it,[2] and the tone and expressions used show that Piero was then head of the family; this would bar all dates earlier than August 1464, or later than December 1469. While yet a further difficulty (and that which has no doubt been the chief reason for the dates hitherto assigned to these

[1] *The Painters of Florence*, by Mrs Ady.

[2] He writes reporting his progress with the frescoes in this chapel, says he requires some more of the (expensive) ultramarine colour, and complains of the great heat in working in the summer weather in this chapel.

frescoes) is introduced by the fact that from 1463 to 1467 Gozzoli was painting his great series of frescoes at San Gimignano, writing dated letters from thence at that period; and that in 1468 he signed an agreement for the execution of his great work in the Pisa Campo Santo, which he is usually supposed to have begun in 1469, and which was his last work.

In the midst of such conflicting evidence (part of which, that given by the picture itself,[1] is too strong to be ignored) the only solution appears to be that these frescoes were painted neither between 1457 and 1459, nor between 1459 and 1463, but between January 1468 and December 1469, the chancel pictures, and possibly some portion of the leading part of the procession (including, perhaps, the figures of the Patriarch and the Emperor) being painted between January 1468 and January 1469, and the remainder of the frescoes in the body of the chapel between February 1469 and December 1469, the work at Pisa not being begun until quite the end of that year. The whole chapel was certainly painted while Piero il Gottoso was head of the family (1464-1469); the chancel pictures could only have been begun upon Gozzoli's return from San Gemignano, *i.e.*, in 1468; while the details connected with the tournament, and the ages of Lorenzo and Giuliano, make February to December 1469 the only possible period when

[1] Besides the Emperor and the Patriarch, the two figures about whom there can be no question are those of Lorenzo and Cosimo, on account both of their dress and the insignia on the trappings of their chargers, Cosimo's three peacock feathers and Lorenzo's tournament dress fixing these two figures with absolute certainty.

the chief part of the frescoes in the body of the chapel could have been executed. Benozzo Gozzoli was noted for his extreme rapidity of work, and though these frescoes are filled with a multiplicity of details it was possible for such an artist as he was to execute them in two years.

Piero's private crest; a falcon holding a diamond ring, with motto "Semper."

CHAPTER VIII

LORENZO, THE MAGNIFICENT

Born 1449. (*Ruled* 1469-1492.) *Died* 1492.

(1) THE FIRST NINE YEARS OF HIS RULE—1469-1478

Lorenzo, the elder son of Piero il Gottoso, was only twenty years old when, by his father's death, he became the head of the family, and succeeded to the rule of Florence. Six months earlier he had been married, as already noted, to Clarice Orsini. His three sisters, Maria, Lucrezia (or Nannina), and Bianca, married respectively to Leopetto Rossi, Bernardo Rucellai, and Guglielmo de' Pazzi, were all older than himself, while his brother Giuliano was four years his junior. His mother, Lucrezia, lived during the first thirteen years of his rule over Florence. Having been for several years accustomed to take a large part in public affairs, he was better prepared than most young men of his age would have been for the position to which he was called so much earlier than either his father or his grandfather had been, each of whom had been over forty when he became head of the family.

In Lorenzo the Magnificent[1] the abilities of this family reached their climax. Probably no other man has ever had great talents in so many directions. In statesmanlike insight and judgment; in political wisdom and promptness of decision; in power of influencing men; in profound knowledge of the ancient classical authors; as a poet and writer who bore a principal part in the development of the Italian language; in artistic taste and critical knowledge of the various branches of Art; in knowledge of agriculture, the life and needs of the people, and country pursuits: in all these different directions was Lorenzo eminent. The title of *Magnificent*, which has by common consent been accorded to him, was not due to any ostentation in his private life, for there he was notably unostentatious. "He was so called because of his extraordinary abilities, his great liberality, his lavish expenditure of his wealth for the public benefit, and the general magnificence of his life in which Florence participated."[2] So that his name is intended to bring to our minds, not personal ostentation, but the splendour with which he invested Florence.

Yet while Lorenzo raised Florence to be the most important state in Italy, set her on a pinnacle as the acknowledged intellectual and artistic capital of Europe, and increased the prosperity of her citizens to the highest point, he has (from later ages) received unmeasured condemnation for a far-reaching change which he brought about in her government, and for the

[1] Plate XVII.
[2] *Lorenzo de' Medici*, by E. Armstrong, M.A.

creation in this jealously guarded Republic of what was practically an autocracy. It is true that his grandfather Cosimo had wielded an influence in the State such as enabled him to sway public affairs according to his will. But the position created by Lorenzo went beyond this, and was different in kind. In his case it was not an influence, but a rule. Lorenzo, as a matter of fact, had a greater power of statesmanlike vision than even his grandfather Cosimo. He saw that the Florentines were too liable to give way to private feuds to be really fitted for republican institutions, while under an autocratic rule there was practically no limit to the political importance and domestic prosperity to which Florence might be conducted. That he should cherish the desire that his own family should be the one to exercise that rule was not only natural, but justified. The Medici alone among the families of Florence had shown themselves to possess the qualities which could successfully govern the Florentines. Their power had been gained by those means which alone give a just title to rule;[1] while added to all other qualifications, they possessed as a family a positive genius for pouring oil on troubled waters, and getting men to work harmoniously together who under any other rule were ever at enmity. This valuable characteristic (which has passed unnoticed) Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo himself all possessed in a marked degree; while it is one which comes out again and again in this family long after their time.

Lorenzo, in carrying out this change, took

[1] *See* chap. x. p. 331.

PLATE XVIII.

LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT AT TWENTY-NINE.
(Head from Bertoldo's medallion.)
Burton]

PLATE XVIII.

CLARICE ORSINI, WIFE OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.
Medallion by Bertoldo.
Burton]

a unique course. Convinced that an autocratic style of government was the only one of which the conditions of the time admitted, he yet did not follow the example of other rulers around him who in that age were erecting thrones, their methods being force, crime, and treachery. Instead, he solved the apparently impossible problem of combining two things diametrically opposed, an autocracy and a democracy, and contrived to preserve the form of government loved by his countrymen and yet to wield personally an autocratic power. Unsupported by any military force, he yet exercised absolute authority; but only because his countrymen well knew that no one else could produce such happy results. The Florentines saw their city, through his abilities, raised to the leading place among Italian states, made the intellectual and artistic capital of Europe, and daily advancing in a commercial prosperity in which they each individually shared; and they had no desire to kill the goose which laid such golden eggs. They felt that however autocratic was Lorenzo's rule, they had power to end it whenever determined to do so. And the correctness of the view was fully proved by subsequent events.[1]

While, however, Lorenzo wielded an autocratic power, it is necessary to bear in mind, especially in financial matters, that the governing body of the State remained as heretofore the Signoria. The word "rule" or "reign," as applied to the Medici (although it is impossible to use any other), is calculated to lead to the supposition that they

[1] Chap. x. pp. 319-324.

received the money raised by taxation, and hence to the idea, when we hear of large expenditure by them for the public benefit or amusement, or for the advancement of Learning, that the money so spent was public money, and that possibly the people were heavily taxed to provide it—all of which would be the very opposite of the truth. The money raised by taxation was received by the Signoria and spent by that body in other directions, and that which the Medici spent on works for the public benefit, or on pageants and festivities for the amusement of the people, was given from their own private fortune derived from their great banking business.

The historian of his time, Machiavelli,[1] speaks of Lorenzo thus:—

"He governed the Republic with great judgment, and was recognised as an equal by various crowned heads of other countries. Though noticeably without military ability, he yet conducted several wars to a successful conclusion by his diplomacy. He was the greatest patron of Literature and Art that any prince has ever been, and he won the people by his liberality and other popular qualities. By his political talents he made Florence the leading state in Italy, and by his other qualities he made her the intellectual, artistic and fashionable centre of Italy."

And in connection with these achievements Lorenzo shows one notable characteristic. Though he had in him the capacity to do all this, and was in ability a head and shoulders above all

[1] Machiavelli's *History of Florence* was written about 1513, and "is a vivid picture of the life of the Florentine Republic drawn with simplicity and vigour." (*Florence*, by F. A. Hyett.)

men around him, yet never throughout his life did he show any arrogance (that quality in the Uberti, the Albizzi, the Pazzi, and other chief families of Florence which the people had always so detested), and to the day of his death, though so admired by Florence as the source of all her greatness, remained always singularly free from this failing. Autocratic sovereign of Tuscany, practically arbiter of the politics of all Italy,[1] treated by the sovereigns of France and England as an equal, there is not a sign in him of that arrogant self-assertion which in one belonging to a *bourgeois* family would with so many have been an inevitable accompaniment of such greatness. Lorenzo did not maintain even the amount of state considered necessary by the President of a modern Republic. No officials guarded the entrance to the Medici Palace. To every citizen of Florence Lorenzo behaved and spoke on all occasions, public or private, as to an equal, while every historian mentions his marked courtesy of manner even to the poorest of the people.

Such was the young head of the Medici family who at so early an age succeeded to the thorny position of ruler over turbulent Florence, without any military force to support that rule, or anything else to rely upon but his own abilities. In his memoirs Lorenzo himself describes the manner of his accession in terms that are almost comical in their diplomatic depreciation of the position to which he was called and his own ability to fill it. He says:—

[1] Guicciardini says that he came to be styled "the needle of the Italian compass."

"The second day after my father's death, although I, Lorenzo, was very young, that is to say, only in my twenty-first year,[1] the principal men of the city and of the State came to our house to condole with us on our loss, and to encourage me to take on myself the care of the city and of the State, as my father and grandfather had done. This proposal being against the instincts of my youthful age, and considering that the burden and danger were great, I consented to it unwillingly; but I did so in order to protect our friends and property; for it fares ill in Florence with any one who possesses wealth without any control in the government."

The contrast in Lorenzo's case between the difficult conduct of public affairs, and the chief outward occupations of his life, particularly during the earlier part of his rule, is very striking. It was a period when the exuberant vitality of the Renaissance was at its height; and the first nine years of his rule, when he was from twenty to twenty-nine, and his brother Giuliano from sixteen to twenty-five, was a time in Florence of constant festivities, of music, art, and poetry, of joy and laughter, and all the bright side of life. It was the fashion of the day to import into all amusements an imitation of the classic times of ancient Greece, and the Florence of that time appears set before us as a city "with youth at the prow and pleasure at the helm," and full of all the life, joy, and pleasure of the old pagan ideal of Greece set in a fifteenth-century dress. Besides all his duties in regard to State affairs, and labours in the founding of

[1] Actually he was only a very little over twenty.

institutions to advance Learning,[1] not to mention his own literary work, Lorenzo with his brother led these festivities, organising pageants and other spectacles of the most costly description (permeated with classical learning and poetical allusions) for the popular amusement. Nor are Lorenzo and Giuliano to be considered as the sole authors of such a change from the old "plain living and high-thinking" ideal of Florence; the age was one in which this sort of thing was in the air throughout Italy, and not in Florence alone; it was the way in which that portion of human need which in our age is provided for by theatres and music halls was then supplied. Lorenzo has been charged with thus leading the Florentines into profligacy, but had that been the case there could scarcely have failed to have been evidence of some protest made by his high-minded mother, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, whose influence over him was, we know, very great.

The entertainments organised by these two brilliant young Medici took the form, sometimes of grand processions and tournaments, but more often of the most elaborate allegorical masques. Lorenzo and Giuliano themselves designed the various tableaux, into which every kind of classical allusion was woven, while their execution was entrusted to the greatest artists of the day, no trouble or expense being spared to make these gorgeous spectacles, in which the times of ancient Greece were revived before the eyes of the Florentines, as perfect and dramatic as possible. The costumes and chariots were designed by the most celebrated painters; the groups were arranged

[1] *See* chap. ix. p. 273.

by renowned sculptors; the speeches were prepared by the foremost classical scholars, such as Marsilio Ficino, Luigi Pulci, and Politian. Horses were dressed up in the skins of lions and tigers; beautiful women posed as the goddesses of pagan divinity; and poets wrote elaborate compositions in verse describing the meaning of the different tableaux in the processions.

Nor were the young people of the time very unlike those of our own day in devising pastimes of a yet lighter kind. Not to mention midnight tournaments in which fireworks took the place of more deadly weapons, and magnificently arrayed processions by the young men to serenade the young ladies they desired to honour, we have, in a letter to Lorenzo the year before, a midnight snowballing match related. The heroine of this particular adventure was Marietta Palla Strozzi, the daughter of Lorenzo Palla Strozzi, the young heiress who, both her parents being dead, was thought unduly emancipated because she "lived where she liked and did what she would," and whose features are immortalised by Desiderio's beautiful bust of her[1] — half princess, half wayward child, with saucy chin and wilful hair. Writing in Latin to Lorenzo, then absent at Pisa, his friend, Filippo Corsini, detailing the latest doings of Florentine society, says:—

"And whilst I am writing to thee almost the whole city is covered with snow—tiresome for many, and obliging them to stay within, but for others a cause of much merriment and pleasure. Thou must know that there were together Lottieri

[1] Chap. iv. p. 126.

Neroni, Priore Pandolfini, and Bartolommeo Benci" —Marietta's betrothed[1]—"and they did say, 'Let us seize upon the occasion to make some fine diversion.' And immediately, at about two o'clock of the night, they did present themselves before the house of Marietta Strozzi, followed by a great multitude assembled from every part, to make sport with her at throwing snow. They gave her a portion, and then they began. Ye immortal gods, what a spectacle! How can I describe it unto thee, my Lorenzo, in this feeble prose—the innumerable torches, the blowing of trumpets, the piping of flutes, the excited and cheering crowd! And what a triumph when one of the besiegers did succeed in flinging snow upon the maiden's face, as white as the snow itself! But what do I say—flinging snow? It was truly a veritable shooting at a mark, and by most expert marksmen! Moreover, Marietta herself, so graceful and so skilled in this game, and beautiful, as all do know, did acquit herself with very great honour. But the noble youths would not take leave of her until they had bestowed most generous gifts upon her for a remembrance of them. And thus, to the great contentment of all, this pleasant sport came to an end."[2]

Well might Lorenzo write in his poems:—

"Quant'è bella giovinezza
Che si fugge tuttavia.
Chi vuol esser lieto, sia;
Di doman non c'è certezza."[3]

---

[1] Nevertheless Marietta did not marry the hero of this snowballing match. She married in 1471 one of the Calcagnini family of Ferrara, and left Florence for the city of which Leonora of Arragon became two years later the Duchess.

[2] *Women of Florence*, by Isidoro del Lungo.

[3] "How beautiful is youth
Which yet flies quickly away.
Who has a mind to be joyous, let him be so;
For of to-morrow there is no certainty"

But Lorenzo was not always planning pageants and festivities, or engaged in State affairs. Many other things also occupied his attention. Around his villa on Fiesole he gave small villas to the most celebrated literary men of the time, thus gathering round him a society of *literati* of whom we are told that "their readings, recitations, and discussions revived a knowledge and love of classical learning for which posterity has the utmost reason to be grateful."[1] In his villa at Fiesole, and in his beloved villa of Careggi, Lorenzo read with them the ancient authors, wrote Latin verses and poetry in the language of Tuscany, and took an active part in musical entertainments. A feast was held at his villa of Careggi every 7th November to commemorate the birth of Plato, and remarkable indeed must have been one of these gatherings of all the most brilliant scholars of the time.[2] Lorenzo found time also for field sports, of which both he and Giuliano were passionately fond—rising, he says at earliest dawn, when "the east is already red and the tops of the mountains appear to be of gold." And the remarkable thing is, that notwithstanding pageants, classical studies, literary work, social gatherings, and field sports, there was no neglect of public affairs, but that, on the contrary, these were most ably administered.

In 1470, soon after his father Piero's death, there came (as on each occasion that the family gained a new head) another attempt to destroy

[1] Roscoe.

[2] Marsilio Ficino, in a letter to Bracciolini, describes one of these birthday feasts.

the Medici. Dietisalvi Neroni[1] and the others exiled with him thought they saw an opportunity for doing this now that Piero was gone, and in view of Lorenzo's youth and inexperience. Accordingly, having collected a force they seized Prato, the nearest of Florence's subject towns, and hoped by means of concurrent intrigues in Florence and assistance from Ferrara to succeed in the above object. But Lorenzo was equal to the occasion: the intrigues in the city were foiled by his tact, troops were sent from Florence who retook Prato, and the rebellion was put down.

In 1471 the Duke of Milan, Galeazzo Sforza, came with his wife, Bona of Savoy, and two daughters, and a great retinue, to visit Lorenzo, the latter having himself twice been entertained at Milan, once in 1465, when at the age of sixteen he was present at the marriage of Ippolita Sforza to the Duke of Calabria, and again in 1469, when he went to represent his father as godfather to Galeazzo Sforza's infant heir. On the occasion of this visit to Florence[2] the Duke of Milan, desiring to overawe and impress his two young hosts, as well as the people of Florence, came with a great display of his wealth and importance. We are told that his retinue included "councillors,

[1] The name is a corruption of *Dio ti salvi* ("God save thee").

[2] During this visit, at the performance of a miracle play, the church of Santo Spirito caught fire and was burnt down. Until recently there has been confusion among writers over this burning of Santo Spirito in 1471, since Brunelleschi's celebrated masterpiece, which still stands, was known to have been begun in 1430. The matter has now been cleared up by Moreni in his *Due Vite*, in which he quotes the writings of Bandinucci, who tells us that the fire of 1471 took place in the *old* church of Santo Spirito, and that the new church (Brunelleschi's), which had been begun in 1430 and was, when the fire occurred, nearly completed, stood next to it, and was not touched by the fire.

chamberlains, courtiers, and vassals; twelve litters covered with gold brocade, in which the ladies of the party travelled; 50 grooms in liveries of cloth of silver; numerous servants all clad, even the kitchen boys, in silk or velvet; 50 war horses with saddles of gold brocade, gilded stirrups, and silk-embroidered bridles; and 500 couple of hounds, with huntsmen, falcons, and falconers, together with trumpeters, players, and musicians. Also a bodyguard of 100 knights and 500 infantry."

But all this did not have the effect he intended; he stayed in the Medici Palace, which taught him a valuable lesson. For desirous as he had been to display to the Florentines how much greater was the wealth and splendour of Milan, he was forced by what he saw around him to acknowledge that Art was superior to mere costliness; while we find him declaring that in all Italy he had not seen so many pictures by the first masters, statues, gems, bronzes, beautiful vases, medallions, and rare books, as he saw collected in the palace of the Medici. The result was that he departed at the end of his visit with a greatly increased respect for the Medici, and more inclined than he had previously been to maintain the alliance with Florence. From this time forward we find Milan following in the steps of Florence, and its Duke constantly writing to Lorenzo asking him to send him the foremost artists, and endeavouring in every way to make Milan also a centre of Learning and Art.

In July of this same year Pope Paul II. died, and was succeeded by Sixtus IV. On the election of the latter the Signoria of Florence sent an

embassy to Rome, in accordance with the usual custom, to congratulate him; Lorenzo formed one of the representatives of Florence,[1] and says in his memoirs that he was received by the new Pope "very honourably." These satisfactory relations, however, did not last long; Sixtus IV. soon became a Pope whose crimes caused mankind to loathe the very name of the Papacy; and before many years were over he was forming a formidable plot against Lorenzo's life and the independence of the Florentine state.

In June 1472 took place an event in regard to which Lorenzo's conduct has been so grossly distorted by his detractors that the episode has to receive notice. Volterra, the most turbulent of Florence's subject towns, had raised a revolt in connection with some local disputes, and on the matter being referred to Florence had refused to submit to the decision of the Government; riots occurred in which many lives were lost, and the Florentine envoy only just escaped from the city with his life. Subsequently Volterra sent to Florence offering submission. Some were for accepting it, but Lorenzo was against this, on the ground that the offence had been serious, that it was not the first occasion of the kind on the part of Volterra, and that the city ought to receive punishment. It may have been an error of judgment, but even this cannot be known; while, even if it were so, it must be remembered that Lorenzo was at this time only twenty-three years old. Eventually, a force was sent against Volterra

[1] A fact which incidentally shows how far Lorenzo's position was from that of a sovereign ruler, notwithstanding all his power.

commanded by the Duke of Urbino (neither Florence nor Venice allowing their armies to be commanded by one of their own citizens), and after a month's siege the town surrendered, and opened its gates. Then occurred the lamentable event in question. As the force entered an affray accidentally took place between some of the troops and the populace, and this rapidly spreading grew into a sack of the town. The Duke of Urbino did everything possible to restrain his troops; he rode among them protecting the women and children, and he hanged on the spot several of the soldiery who were foremost in inciting the rest. But on such occasions a mediæval force was practically uncontrollable, and in spite of all his efforts the unfortunate inhabitants were for some hours subjected to outrage and plunder as though the town had been taken by assault. Lorenzo at once proceeded to Volterra, and did his utmost to mitigate the sufferings which had been endured. He has been severely condemned for this sack of Volterra; but certainly not with justice. It was the result of an accident which he could not have foreseen; and he showed by his subsequent conduct how much he deplored it.[1]

In 1473 we find Louis XI. writing to Lorenzo, asking him to effect a marriage between the Dauphin and Leonora of Arragon, the eldest daughter of King Ferrante of Naples. Louis XI. writes to Lorenzo quite as an equal, and this with the request itself show what a position the latter

[1] "He personally visited the town, distributed relief among the sufferers, reassured the inhabitants, and during the rest of his life spent liberally on estates which he had purchased in the neighbourhood."—(Armstrong.)

had by this time made for himself, though as yet only twenty-four years of age. But the King of France was too late in his request, for the Princess Leonora[1] had already been betrothed elsewhere; and on the 22nd June a very grand cavalcade, scarcely less imposing than that of the Duke of Milan two years before, arrived at Florence escorting her to Ferrara to be married to Ercole I., Duke of Ferrara, who had succeeded his brother Borso in 1471. She was accompanied by two brothers of Duke Ercole, the lords of Carpi, Mirandola, and Coreggio, the Dukes of Amalfi and Atri, and a number of other nobles. Entering by the Porta Romana this brilliant *cortège* rode through the city, Leonora "dressed all in black velvet, adorned in front with numberless pearls and jewels, with a cape, and a little black hat with white feathers." They crossed the Ponte Vecchio and rode up to the Palazzo della Signoria, where Leonora, without dismounting, received an address from the Signoria, and then rode on to the Medici Palace, where she stayed during her visit, and at dinner was waited upon by her two young hosts, Lorenzo and Giuliano. She stayed with them several days, during which various festivities were arranged for her amusement. Among these was a dance on the 24th June at the Palazzo Lenzi, near the Porta Prato. In those days of inferior artificial light and small rooms, such dances generally took place during daylight and in the open air, as was the case with this one, which was given on the "Prato," or open stretch of grass beside the city gate, between the palace and the

[1] Afterwards the mother of Isabella and Beatrice d'Este.

Arno. Probably those who took part in it were dressed much in the same way as is related of a dance which took place on a previous occasion in the Piazza della Signoria,[1] in which the young men were all dressed "in rich green cloth, with kid boots reaching up to their thighs, and the younger ladies in splendid dresses high to the throat, and adorned with jewels and pearls." Leonora also witnessed the annual horse-race (the Corso) which took place on the same day, the starting-point being the "Prato," and the course being from thence, by the Via della Vigna, the Mercato Vecchio, and the Corso, to the Porta alla Croce. After these and other festivities Leonora departed for Ferrara, much pleased with the two young Medici.

In 1475 there took place a more than usually grand tournament, the most splendid of all the spectacles during those joyous nine years. It was called specially Giuliano's, as that in 1469 had been called Lorenzo's. And from the elaborate preparations made for it, the interest it aroused far beyond the limits of the Florentine state, the number and importance of the visitors invited by the two young Medici to be their guests for the occasion, and the extravagantly magnificent pageant which it presented, this tournament became the event of the time. It was held in the Piazza Sta. Croce, the usual place for these grand spectacles, which piazza, though it now looks so cold and grey, has seen more brilliant and gorgeous displays than perhaps any other place of the kind in Europe.

[1] On a wooden stage erected for the occasion on the side of the piazza towards the Via Condotta.

Lucrezia Donati was again the "Queen of the tournament," and the beautiful Simonetta Cattaneo, who had lately been married, at the age of sixteen, to Marco Vespucci, and, though a Genoese by birth, was now the acknowledged belle of Florence, was the tournament's "Queen of Beauty."[1] The splendour of the dresses and appointments on this occasion exceeded even those of the tournament of 1469; Giuliano, now twenty-two, wore a suit of silver armour, and his entire dress is said to have cost 8,000 florins; his and Lorenzo's helmets were designed by Verrocchio, who also painted Giuliano's standard. Giuliano's handsome looks and gallant bearing won all hearts, and whether as the result of his skill in the combat or his good looks he was awarded the prize.

This notable tournament, having formed so prominent an event, was immortalised both in poetry and in painting. And since nothing accorded with the spirit of the age which did not contain profuse allusion to classical literature, both arts clothe what they have to say in classic dress. Poetry speaks first, by the mouth of the youthful prodigy Politian; and just as the tournament of 1469 had been immortalised by Pulci's poem thereon, so was this one of Giuliano by the still more celebrated poem of Politian,[2] entitled *La Giostra di Giuliano de' Medici.* Roscoe says:—

"These two tournaments are chiefly notable because they called forth two of the most celebrated poems of the fifteenth century, *La Giostra di*

[1] Her charms and goodness were the favourite theme of Politian and all the poets of the time.

[2] Politian, when he wrote this poem, was only twenty-one years old.

Lorenzo de' Medici, by Pulci, and *La Giostra di Giuliano de' Medici*, by Politian. The latter poem contains about 1,400 lines, and has been uniformly allowed to be one of the earliest productions in the revival of letters that breathes the true spirit of poetry."[1]

Still more widely known, however, is the record by which Painting has commemorated this tournament. For no less than three of Botticelli's chief pictures refer to this celebrated tournament, and are simply his way of recording in painting the same matters which had been spoken of by Politian in poetry; though Botticelli, *more suo*, expresses what he has to say with such a wealth of allegory that this has not always been fully recognised. These pictures are: his *Birth of Venus* (now in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence), his *Mars and Venus* (now in the National Gallery, London), and his *Return of Spring* (now in the Accademia, Florence); all three pictures being painted for Lorenzo the Magnificent.[2]

Politian, in his poem, following the classical fashion of the day, in allusion to the tournament's Queen of Beauty (Simonetta), describes the birth of Venus. And Botticelli does the same in painting, following exactly Politian's words. How closely he has done so is well described by Mrs Ady, who says:—

"The composition (of the picture) was evidently derived from Poliziano's poem of the *Giostra*. In

[1] Roscoe's *Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent*.

[2] My reasons for considering that the theory recently propounded that these pictures were painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco is altogether erroneous are given in Appendix VII.

a passage adapted from one of the Homeric hymns the poet tells us how the new-born Aphrodite was blown by the soft breath of the Zephyrs, on the foam of the Egean waves to shore. Heaven and earth, he sings, rejoice at her coming. The Hours wait to welcome her and spread a star-sown robe over her white limbs, while countless flowers spring up in the grass where her feet will tread. All this exquisite imagery is faithfully reproduced in Sandro's painting. He has represented his Venus Anadyomene laying one hand on her snowy breast, the other on her loose tresses of golden hair—a form of virginal beauty and purity, as with feet resting on the golden shell she glides softly over the rippling surface of the waves. He has painted the winged Zephyrs hovering in the air linked fast together, blowing the goddess to the flower-strewn shore, and the shower of single roses fluttering about her form. Only, instead of the three Hours of Homer's hymn and Poliziano's poem, he shows us one fair nymph, in a white robe embroidered with blue corn-flowers, springing lightly forward to offer Venus a pink mantle sown with daisies. In the laurel groves along the shore we see a courtly allusion to the 'Laurel who sheltered the song-birds that carolled to the Tuscan spring';[1] while in the background the eye roams across long reaches of silent sea to distant headlands sleeping under the cool grey light of early dawn."[2]

The picture charms us by its delightful mixture of the spirit of ancient Greece with that of the Renaissance, as well as by its life and move-

[1] It was in these words that Politian had spoken of Lorenzo the Magnificent and his works as a poet. The laurel grove is a conspicuous feature of the picture, spreading right out from the shore over Venus as if protecting her.

[2] *Sandro Botticelli*, by Mrs Ady (1903).

ment, and its sensation of the free air of nature. As Steinmann says: — "We seem to hear the tremulous rustle of the laurel grove, and the gentle plash of the waves."[1]

Following this we have the second picture. The tournament is over; Giuliano has carried all before him and rests from his fatigues, basking in beauty's smiles. Politian, in his poem, alluding to Giuliano as the victor in the tournament, had told the story of Mars and Venus, and described Venus, reclining in a woodland glade, robed in gold-embroidered draperies, watching Mars with limbs relaxed lying asleep on the grass, while little goat-footed satyrs played with his armour. This scene Botticelli takes for his second picture, and as before follows closely Politian's words.

And then, having devoted one picture to the tournament's Queen of Beauty, and one to the victor in its mimic warfare, Botticelli makes his third picture (the most important of the three) relate to Lorenzo and his part in all this, gathering up in one view the whole subject of these pastimes.[2] This Botticelli does with great talent, and in a manner all his own. He takes for his text the celebrated standard which had been borne in front of Lorenzo at both his and Giuliano's tournaments, with its motto of *Le temps revient*, its device of the bay-tree which had appeared dead again putting forth its leaves, and its allusion[3] to the new era of youth and joy which Lorenzo had inaugurated,

[1] *See* also Walter Pater's comments on this picture in *The Renaissance*.

[2] This true meaning of the *Primavera*, and Botticelli's deliberate intention to make it speak of Lorenzo, his tournament motto, and how during the six years that had since passed he had carried it out, has apparently not hitherto been noticed.

[3] Chap. vi. p. 160.

and had likened to the return of spring after the gloomy months of winter. Making the leading thought of his picture the theme on Lorenzo's standard, Botticelli paints for him his beautiful picture, the *Return of Spring* (the Primavera), perhaps the most widely admired of all Botticelli's pictures. As before, Botticelli connects his picture with the recent tournament by introducing Giuliano and Simonetta; but he wishes to refer not only to this one tournament, but to all these pastimes; to their having been inaugurated by and taking place under the fostering care of Lorenzo (the laurel[1]); and also to the latter's talents as a poet, in which domain he was already beginning to earn a great reputation.

And so Botticelli depicts for us a scene of light-hearted, youthful joy, representing the return of spring, and by his great talent contrives that the entire picture shall speak of Lorenzo, and breathe the very spirit of the poems in which the latter had sung of the joys of May-time in Tuscany. Shielded from rough winds and scorching sun by a grove of orange trees, backed by the ever-present laurel, Queen Venus[2] (Simonetta) stands presiding over the return of spring to Tuscany; the Graces dance before her; from out a laurel grove at her side the three spring months, March, April, and May (or it may be Zephyr, Fertility, and Flora), come bringing flowers of every hue; Mercury (Giuliano) scatters the clouds of winter; and the little blind god of love aims

[1] Always representing Lorenzo, from the play on the Latin form of his name, Laurentius.

[2] So constantly associated with the season of spring by the classic poets of antiquity.

his arrows recklessly around. Lorenzo's tournament motto of *Le temps revient* could be written below the picture as its name, so beautifully does Botticelli bring it, the occasion on which it was used, the meaning which it had, and Lorenzo's talent for poetry describing the beauties of nature, all in one glance before our eyes. Some consider this picture Botticelli's masterpiece, while others would give that honour to his *Madonna of the Magnificat*. The verdict will depend chiefly upon the temperament of the observer. But whether the *Return of Spring* be considered his masterpiece or not, none can fail to praise what has been well termed its "rhythmic grace," as well as the surpassing art with which Botticelli has made it speak of Lorenzo, his acts, his poetry, and the motto by which he signified the introduction of a brighter era.

But dark clouds were coming up on the horizon which were ere long to overcast all these bright scenes of joy, putting an end for ever to Lorenzo's youth, and all the happy times which he and Giuliano had enjoyed together. In April 1476, before Politian had finished his poem, or Botticelli had even begun to paint his three pictures,[1] the tournament's poor Queen of Beauty, Simonetta de' Vespucci, whose lovely face looks at us so wistfully in Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*,[2] and of

[1] These pictures relating to Giuliano's tournament could not have been painted until some time afterwards, as in any case they could not have been so until after Politian's poem had appeared; and they may have been executed at any time during Lorenzo's life. If painted, as is most probable, subsequently to Giuliano's death in 1478, they would remind Lorenzo of a time of bygone joys; and would be all the more prized by him on that account.

[2] The picture in the Pitti Gallery of the very plain-looking, elderly person which was long put down as a portrait of Simonetta is now acknowledged not to refer to her.

whom Politian says that she "was so sweet and charming that all men praised her, and no women abused her," was dead, being carried off by rapid consumption after a few weeks' illness. Lorenzo, who was then at Pisa superintending his new university, and had sent his own physician to attend her and to furnish him with daily bulletins, when he heard the news,[1] "went out into the calm spring night to walk with a friend, and as he was speaking of the dead lady he suddenly stopped and gazed at a star which had never before seemed to him so brilliant. 'See,' he exclaimed, 'either the soul of that most gentle lady hath been transformed into that new star, or else hath it been joined together thereunto.'[2]" Then followed in December 1476 the murder of the Duke of Milan, Galeazzo Sforza, which upset the balance of power in Italy, and changing all political relations involved Lorenzo in serious anxieties. And soon afterwards came the terrible Pazzi Conspiracy, and the bright, handsome Giuliano, Lorenzo's constant companion in work and play, and on whose sound sense he had grown greatly to rely, was foully murdered, and Lorenzo himself plunged into a serious war and many troubles.

The Pazzi Conspiracy. 1478.

The celebrated conspiracy which had these results originated at Rome with Pope Sixtus IV. and his nephews of the Riario family. They gained as their accomplices

[1] *Women of Florence*, by Isidoro del Lungo.

[2] Walking shortly afterwards in his garden, Lorenzo called attention to a sun-flower "which at evening remains with its face turned towards the western horizon which has taken from it the vision of the sun," and declared it a symbol of ourselves when we lose one whom we love, "for we remain," said he, "with the thought turned towards the last impression of the lost vision." (*Women of Florence.*)

the Pazzi, at this time the leading family amongst the nobles in Florence, and the conspiracy has taken its name from them, though they were not the chief authors of the plot.

Sixtus IV., the first of three Popes who in this age attained an evil pre-eminence, was a fisherman by birth and took the name of the Della Rovere family. His sister married a Riario. Of him it has been said that he "was the first Pope who for the sake of founding a family, sacrificed every interest of the Church, and waded deep in crime and bloodshed for this purpose." The chief political feature of his pontificate is a constant struggle to rob all, right and left, of their possessions to enrich his rapacious nephews. He made himself hated in Rome, above all, for his cruel treatment of the Colonna family, whom he pursued with relentless ferocity, and of all his crimes his atrocious murder of the head of that family, the Protonotary Lorenzo Colonna, in order to wring from them the surrender of their estates, has made his name for ever odious.[1]

Sixtus IV., urged on by Girolamo Riario, the most evil of his nephews, desired to seize upon Florence in order to give that state to Girolamo. That this involved the murder of the two Medici brothers was a mere detail. The Pazzi, on the other hand, though they desired to exterminate the Medici, had no intention of allowing the Riario to obtain Florence afterwards. Thus did these two bands of criminals combine for the common object of a treacherous double murder, each of them determined to outwit the other when that should have been effected.

[1] *See* vol. ii. p. 190.

The arrangements took some time, but eventually the two parties hatched at Rome, early in 1478, the plot known as the Pazzi Conspiracy, certainly with the full cognisance[1] of the Pope, even though it may be true that he did not know all the details; for these he left to his nephew, Girolamo Riario, the chief originator of the plot, and did not desire to know them so long as the result, the removal of the two Medici, was achieved. In fact, without the Pope's full concurrence Girolamo Riario would never have undertaken an affair involving so many risks, which might, without that support, bring him no profit. Troops, under Niccolò da Tolentino and Lorenzo Giustini, were sent to occupy points on Florence's frontiers at Todi, Città di Castello, Imola, and near Perugia, and arrangements made for their marching upon Florence while that city should be in the state of confusion and helplessness which would result from the murder of the two Medici. As has been remarked, "For such extensive movements the Pope's assent and co-operation were essential."[2]

The principal movers in the business were Girolamo Riario, who was to obtain the state of Florence; Francesco Salviati, Archbishop designate of Pisa, who was promised that he should be made Archbishop of Florence if the attempt succeeded;

[1] Jacopo de' Pazzi's reluctance to join the plot until he was assured that it had the Pope's concurrence, Montesecco's confession before his execution regarding what passed at the interview with the Pope to which he was taken by Girolamo Riario, the preparation of troops, and lastly, the behaviour of Pope Sixtus when the plot failed, all make it impossible to doubt this, notwithstanding Bishop Creighton's desire to absolve the Pope from complicity in the matter.

[2] Armstrong.

the young cardinal, Rafaello Riario, the Pope's grand-nephew, who was sent to Florence to represent Girolamo; and the Pazzi family. The latter were very numerous; Jacopo de' Pazzi, who was head of the family, had two brothers, and between them they had ten grown-up sons, besides many daughters. Cosimo, foreseeing the enmity of the Pazzi, had arranged a marriage between one of these nephews of Jacopo de' Pazzi and his granddaughter, Bianca, Lorenzo's sister; but when the time came this did not protect Lorenzo from the Pazzi. When all the plans of the conspirators were ready the Archbishop Salviati came to Florence bringing with him Montesecco, a mercenary soldier in the Pope's employ, who was to play the chief part in the murder, and other conspirators. At the same time the young cardinal, Rafaello Riario, also came to Florence, ostensibly on a visit to Jacopo de' Pazzi. The cowardly Girolamo Riario, though he was the chief author of the plot, and was to be the person to benefit by it, took care to remain out of harm's way in Rome.

Lorenzo and Giuliano were at the time staying at the charming Medici villa a few miles out of Florence, on the slope of the hill of Fiesole.[1] Rafaello Riario and his retinue stayed with Jacopo de' Pazzi at his neighbouring villa of Laveggi. They were invited by the two Medici brothers to a grand banquet to take place at the Medici villa on Saturday, the 25th April. And the first plan formed by the conspirators was to poison the two brothers at this banquet. The entertainment

[1] This villa still exists. After having been called, first the Villa Mozzi, and then the Villa Spence, it has now happily by its present owner been made to revert to its original and proper name of the Villa Medici.

took place, but Giuliano being indisposed was unable to be present; so the plan fell through. The Pazzi then told Lorenzo that the young Cardinal Riario was anxious to see the treasures of the Medici Palace; upon which Lorenzo invited him and his retinue to stay with him there for the Sunday, when the cardinal intended being present at High Mass in the cathedral. Whereupon the conspirators laid the plan that after attending Mass and returning to the Medici Palace for dinner, their two young hosts should be murdered as they rose from the table. In accordance with the above invitation the party removed to the Medici Palace, but on the Sunday morning it was found that though Giuliano would be at Mass he was still too unwell to be at the midday dinner; so again another plan had to be formed. Nor could any delay be allowed, since on that evening the troops of Niccolò da Tolentino and Giustini would be at the gates of the city. It was therefore hastily decided that the murder should take place at the service in the cathedral, where it was known that there would be a great crowd, which would facilitate the escape of the murderers. Montesecco, however, declined to take part in this plan, as he "refused to add sacrilege to murder"; so in his place were substituted the two priests who were among the conspirators, Antonio Maffei and Stefano da Bagnone, who had no such scruples. Meanwhile in the Medici palace every preparation was made for the banquet. The rare silver, majolica, and precious vases were brought out, and the *cortile* which Donatello's medallions and statuary adorned was arranged for the entertainment of so distinguished a company.

It shows somewhat of the general estimation in which the Medici were held in Florence that though for several days danger of this kind, either by poison or dagger, had been all around Lorenzo and Giuliano, both they, their family, and their numerous retainers should have been so entirely without the smallest suspicion of any danger. And it was this entire absence of suspicion on the part of the two brothers which caused the plot to come so very near to succeeding.

Towards midday on the Sunday morning (26th April) Lorenzo left the Medici Palace, walking with his guest, the young cardinal, Rafaello Riario, to the cathedral. After a short interval Giuliano followed, accompanied by Francesco de' Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini. As they walked Francesco de' Pazzi in pretended affection put his arm round Giuliano's waist to ascertain whether he wore a coat of mail under his clothes; which he found he did not. Giuliano on that day was entirely unarmed, not even wearing a sword, having hurt his leg in an accident.

The moment which the conspirators had fixed upon to carry out this diabolical murder during High Mass of the two young men whose hospitality they were enjoying was that of the elevation of the Host; "this moment," says an historian of the time, "being chosen both by reason of the impossibility of mistaking it, and also on account of the bending attitude of worship which it is the habit of every one in the church to assume at that solemn moment in the service." It was this which had caused the mercenary soldier, Montesecco, to draw back from the plot, he being "appalled, ruffian as he was, at the blasphemy of choosing such a moment for so great a crime." And this was the actual cause of

the failure of the plot; for his part had been that of murdering Lorenzo, and the two priests substituted in his place being unused to arms bungled in their work, where those told off to do the same for Giuliano (Bernardo Bandini and Francesco de' Pazzi) succeeded only too well.

In the crowded cathedral the brothers were, according to the plan, separated. At the fatal moment Giuliano, unarmed, was standing at the northern side of the choir,[1] not far from the door leading to the Via de' Servi, while Lorenzo was standing at the south side of the choir. Giuliano, furiously attacked by Bernardo Bandini and Francesco de' Pazzi, fell dead at once where he stood, his body being stabbed again and again as it lay on the ground until it had nineteen wounds.[2] At the same time Maffei and Stefano attacked Lorenzo, but being less prompt than Bandini only succeeded in giving him a wound on the neck. Lorenzo, with much presence of mind, immediately threw off his cloak, wrapped it round his left arm as a shield, and drawing his sword beat off his assailants. He then leaped over the low rail which encircled the choir, and running across in front of the high altar took refuge in the sacristy. Bandini, having slain Giuliano, rushed towards the sacristy to attack Lorenzo, killing on the way with one blow Francesco Nori, a devoted adherent of the Medici, who interposed to prevent him from reaching Lorenzo. Politian, who with one or two others of his friends had followed Lorenzo, closed the heavy bronze doors of the sacristy in Bandini's face; while Antonio Ridolfi sucked Lorenzo's

[1] Plate XIX. The choir and high altar are under the dome, not at the east end of the church.

[2] *See* also p. 245.

wound lest the weapon should have been poisoned.[1] The whole church was at once in an uproar, the people when they knew what had happened being ready to tear in pieces those guilty of the crime; for the moment, however, the latter in the general confusion escaped out of the church; while the young cardinal, Rafaello Riario, took refuge at the high altar. One of Lorenzo's party in the sacristy climbed up into the organ loft, and saw Giuliano's body lying dead at the north side of the choir, and that the conspirators had fled (this being the first intimation that Lorenzo had of what had happened to his brother); and after a little time Lorenzo, wounded and in deep distress at his brother's cruel fate, was escorted home by his friends.

Meanwhile the other and larger portion of the conspirators were occupied at the Palazzo della Signoria. The plot as arranged was a most formidable one, eminently calculated to paralyse Florence and render her powerless to resist the troops of Niccolò da Tolentino and Giustini, who should in a few hours be entering the city. For the plan had been that while those told off to that work carried out the murder of the two brothers in the cathedral, the principal band of the conspirators, headed by the Archbishop Salviati, should proceed to the Palazzo della Signoria, and having gained admittance to the council chamber, should seize the Government, killing all members of the Signoria who resisted. But on the entrance of the Archbishop and his following the Gonfaloniere, Petrucci (who in this crisis showed himself a decidedly strong man), suspected something wrong.

[1] This account of the affair is that given by Filippo Strozzi (the elder), who was an eye-witness.

PALAZZO DELLA SIGNORIA, FLORENCE (PALAZZO VECCHIO).

The five windows from which the conspirators were hung are those on the first floor on the side which is in shadow. The arched building on the right is the Loggia de' Lanzi. The equestrian statue is that of Cosimo I.

CHOIR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF FLORENCE.

Brogi

He therefore kept the Archbishop and his party in play for a short time, detaining the Archbishop in his own private room while he quietly sent out to ascertain if there was anything unusual going on in the city. In a few minutes came the news of the tragedy which had occurred in the cathedral; and with it the gathering noise of the furious people, who, while Jacopo de' Pazzi and others of that family strove to rouse them to rise against the Medici, and rode through the streets crying out "*Libertà!*" were refusing to shout as instigated "*Abbasso le Palle!*"[1] but instead were shouting furiously "*Vivano le Palle!*" The Gonfaloniere, with great resolution, seized the Archbishop, and promptly hanged him from the corner window on the north side of the Palazzo della Signoria[2] (the corner window of the great council hall), and with him, from the adjacent windows, five of his fellow-conspirators, while the rest were slain on the staircase. "Within half an hour twenty-six bodies were encumbering the staircase of the Palazzo della Signoria, and half a dozen more were dangling from its windows."

The remainder of the conspirators were hunted through the city by the enraged people, whose hatred against them was beyond all bounds, and none who fell into their hands were spared even to be handed over to the Signoria for execution. They had not only killed Giuliano, and attempted to kill Lorenzo, but they had also made a formidable endeavour by force of arms, and with the aid of foreign troops, to seize Florence by a *coup de main*, and all these acts

[1] *Palle*, the balls—the arms of the Medici.
[2] Plate XX.

together roused the people to frenzy. They surrounded the Medici Palace and clamoured to see Lorenzo. Wounded as he was, he came out and addressed them, assuring them that he was only slightly hurt, and exhorting them not to execute private vengeance on the perpetrators of this deed, but to reserve their animosity for those foreign enemies of their country who had instigated it. But they paid no heed to his admonition, and all suspected of complicity in the plot were pursued through the streets and slaughtered wherever captured, their mangled remains being dragged about by the infuriated mob, whose rage was not satisfied until about eighty persons had been massacred. Nor was the feeling confined to the city; for days afterwards the country people flocked into Florence, coming, they said, to protect Lorenzo.

But in the Medici Palace was deep and bitter mourning for the bright and justly loved Giuliano, the idol of his family; and mournful preparations for the solemn public funeral to be held in the family church of San Lorenzo.

Nor when the Florentine people had had time to recover from their first excitement did the popular wrath abate; it became less wild, but more determined. Jacopo de' Pazzi had escaped to the village of Castagno, but was seized and brought back by the villagers, and executed by the Signoria. The same fate met Francesco de' Pazzi, one of the two murderers of Giuliano, his cousin Renato de' Pazzi,[1] Montesecco, and

[1] Renato knew of the plot, but is reported to have refused to take part in it; and Lorenzo has been severely, and apparently justly, blamed for not intervening to save his life, as he did in the case of Renato's cousin Guglielmo. It is possible, however, that Lorenzo knew more than transpired, while he may easily not have felt inclined to do for other members of the family what he did for his sister's husband.

the two priests, Maffei and Stefano. Guglielmo de' Pazzi, brother of Francesco and husband of Lorenzo's favourite sister Bianca, would probably also have lost his life had not Lorenzo, on his sister's account, intervened on his behalf; in consequence Guglielmo was merely banished to a short distance from Florence. The remaining seven of the ten sons or nephews of Jacopo de' Pazzi were sentenced either to imprisonment for longer or shorter periods, or to banishment. "Vespucci also richly deserved hanging, but was let off with two years' imprisonment."[1] Bernardo Bandini, the other murderer of Giuliano, escaped to Constantinople; there, however, he was seized by the Sultan, and sent back in chains to Florence; on his arrival the Signoria at once ordered him to be executed in the Bargello. The indignation of the people, not all of it on account of the attempt against the Medici, but also on account of the effrontery of such an endeavour to seize upon their state "as if a mere spoil of war," caused them to seek for every possible method which they could devise to brand with deserved infamy those who had perpetrated this deed. By a public decree of the Signoria the name and arms of the Pazzi family were ordered to be for ever suppressed. Their palace,[2] and all places in the city named after them, were given other names. All persons contracting marriage with any of that family were declared prohibited from all offices in the Republic. The ancient ceremony on Easter Eve of conducting the sacred fire to the house of the Pazzi was abolished.[3] An artist was employed at the public

[1] Armstrong.
[2] Known to us as the Palazzo Quaratesi.
[3] It was many years before it was re-established.

expense to represent on the walls of the Bargello the bodies of the traitors to the Republic suspended, as a mark of infamy, by the feet. And a medal[1] was struck, by order of the Signoria, representing the choir of the cathedral, the heads of Lorenzo and Giuliano, and the attacks made upon them.

While the fury of the Florentines was thus at a white heat against those who had perpetrated this crime and come so near bringing their country under such a yoke as Sixtus IV. had intended, Lorenzo showed in the midst of the frenzy of his city one trait which is deserving of notice; and it was an inherited one. Whether he felt that, notwithstanding the part in the matter which the one member of the Riario family who had come to Florence had played, the latter had been only a tool in the hands of older men, or whatever the cause, it was to Lorenzo that the young cardinal, Rafaello Riario, entirely owed the saving of his life. When the uproar in the cathedral took place the young cardinal took refuge, as already noted, at the high altar, whence he dared not stir. Lorenzo, on reaching home, sent a party of his retainers to protect him, and to conduct him to the Medici Palace, the sole place in the whole city where he could be in safety; there he kept him hidden for some days until the violence of the people had cooled down, and then sent him away in secrecy to Rome. Lorenzo showed similar magnanimity in saving the lives of Rafaello Maffei, the brother of the priest who had attempted to murder him, and of Averardo Salviati, a near relation of the Archbishop who had taken so prominent a part in the plot.

[1] Executed by Bertoldo (*see* p. 245).

Such, then, was the Pazzi Conspiracy. It differs in no way from the most brutal highway murder and robbery except in its consummate treachery and the high position of its authors. Yet it will scarcely be credited that some writers have styled it a praiseworthy act. Thus, for instance, we find Sismondi crediting the chief actors in the Pazzi Conspiracy with "noble motives." He sees in the conduct of Sixtus IV. (whose motive is well known to have been solely the desire to seize Tuscany for his greedy nephew) "elevation of sentiment and a desire for the independence of Italy";[1] and he regards the Pazzi as "noble patriots striving for the liberty of Florence." The Medici have quite enough faults to answer for without their history being distorted in this preposterous fashion. The judgment of a more balanced writer is as follows:—

"The Pope and his nephew attempted to overthrow the Medici rule because it was a bar to enlarging the temporal authority of the one, and to the personal ambition of the other. The Pazzi were perhaps unconscious that they were being used as tools for the attainment of these ends, and had, no doubt, their own ideas as to the future government of Florence, but there is not a tittle of evidence that they were actuated by a love of liberty. Their conduct throughout seems to have been purely vindictive. It was the Medici, and not the Pazzi, who in the past had been on the side of free institutions. The supposition that the Florentines would have preferred the rule of the Pazzi to that of the Medici is ridiculous, or Jacopo de' Pazzi's shouts of *Libertà, Libertà* would not have been answered with the *Palle, Palle* of the

[1] This, by the way, admits the Pope's full complicity in the matter: thus fully refuting those who have desired to absolve him thereof.

multitude. In truth, there has seldom been a conspiracy which was instigated throughout by meaner motives."[1]

Thus did this celebrated conspiracy fail, and the Medici were more popular than ever, and had weathered the fourth and most formidable attempt to destroy them;[2] while Lorenzo, as the result of this attempt, gained much additional strength for the war which was now before him, in the knowledge that he had a united people at his back. But Lorenzo's youth ended with the death of his much-loved brother; there are no more pageants and festivities, but henceforward war, politics, and literary labours, with field sports as the only relaxation.

GIULIANO

Born 1453. *Died* 1478.

Giuliano,[3] the youngest of the five children of Piero il Gottoso and Lucrezia Tornabuoni, was, unlike his brother Lorenzo, exceedingly good-looking; he was gifted with considerable abilities, and for his many endearing qualities was greatly beloved, not only in his own family, but also by the people of Florence. Before his early death he had already shown on several occasions that he possessed plenty of political capacity, and could give valuable advice to his brother. Mr Armstrong, describing his character, says:—

[1] *Florence*, by F. A. Hyett.

[2] Against Cosimo in 1433, Piero in 1466, Lorenzo in 1470, and now again against Lorenzo in 1478.

[3] Plate XXI. There is another fine portrait of Giuliano at Bergamo, by Botticelli, but it scarcely seems to have caught Giuliano's general expression, as evidenced by other likenesses and descriptions, so well as that by Bronzino.

GIULIANO, BROTHER OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.
By Bronzino.

Alinari] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

"He was the darling of high and low, the most attractive of all the Medici. His passion was the chase; he was a bold rider, a skilful jouster, eminent in jumping and in wrestling. Yet he was no brutal athlete. He loved pictures, music, and everything that was beautiful; he loved poetry that told of love; he composed verses in his mother tongue, full of weight and sentiment. He talked brightly and thought soundly, delighted in witty and playful company, but hated above all men those who lied, or bore a grudge for wrongs. Faithful and high-minded, regardful of religious forms and moral decencies, he was ever ready to render service or perform a courteous act. In his relations to his brother, whom he worshipped, there was no sign of jealousy. After the terrible tragedy of his murder at High Mass in the cathedral the city long missed the well-known figure, tall and well proportioned, the olive-tinted features lighted by bright eyes, the long lock on the forehead, and the shock of black hair thrust back upon his neck. He had a grand public funeral in the great church of the Medici family, San Lorenzo, and there was no hypocrisy in the great grief manifested by the people."[1]

The relations which existed between these two brothers is one of the pleasantest things in the history of the Medici. At that epoch jealousy between two brothers placed in such a position as Lorenzo and Giuliano were was the normal state of things. That it was entirely absent in their case speaks well for both of them. And it is an indication of Lorenzo's character, and of what his conduct in the minor relations of life must have been, that he should never have given cause for any feeling of jealousy in a younger brother so

[1] *Lorenzo de' Medici*, by E. Armstrong, M.A.

nearly his equal in ability, and his superior in good looks, and that, on the contrary, the latter should have "worshipped" him; or, again, that Lorenzo from his side should never have felt jealousy at the admiration and popularity so universally bestowed upon Giuliano, and much exceeding that accorded to himself.

Giuliano was twenty-five at the time of his death. He left an illegitimate son, born just at that time. Lorenzo took the child[1] and brought him up with his own sons; and this child became in the next generation the well-known Giulio de' Medici, afterwards Clement VII.

Giuliano, like all previous members of the family except Cosimo, was buried in the Old Sacristy in San Lorenzo; but about eighty years afterwards his remains were removed to the New Sacristy, which had by that time become the principal burial-place of the family. It has always been felt suitable that these two brothers, between whom so strong an affection existed in life, should be buried together; when Lorenzo died his body was laid in the same grave with Giuliano's, their remains were subsequently removed to the New Sacristy together, and there they still lie in the same tomb.

When in October 1895 Lorenzo's and Giuliano's tomb was opened[2] the reason why the latter was so instantly killed became for the first time apparent. The accounts of the murder had always mentioned that his body received a large number of wounds, most of them given after he was already dead, but no mention of a wound on the head was made in any of the accounts. When, however,

[1] His mother was Antonia Gorini. [2] *See* chap. ix. p. 306 (footnote).

the tomb was opened more than four hundred years afterwards it was at once observed that Giuliano's head had an enormous sword-cut extending along the whole of the top of the skull: thus fully accounting for his falling dead at once where he stood.[1] Evidently Giuliano at the elevation of the Host had adopted "the bending attitude" on which the plot relied, and the murderer, Bandini, had taken full advantage of the opportunity it gave, and struck Giuliano down, without his having a chance of defending himself from the blow, by a stroke delivered with great force on his bare head.

[1] Before the skulls and bones were placed in fresh coffins and the tomb again closed photographs of the two skulls were taken; and that of Giuliano's shows very distinctly the great sword-cut above referred to.

Medal by Bertoldo, struck by order of the Government to commemorate the Pazzi Conspiracy, showing Giuliano's portrait, and his murder. The choir of the cathedral had formerly a marble canopy extending over the whole choir, supported on marble pillars, and this canopy is shown in the medallion.

CHAPTER IX

LORENZO, THE MAGNIFICENT

Born 1449. (*Ruled* 1469-1492.) *Died* 1492.

(2) THE LAST FOURTEEN YEARS OF HIS RULE—1478-1492

War with Rome and Naples. 1478-1480.

SIXTUS IV. was furious at the failure of the conspiracy. It added fuel to the flame that Florence should have dared to hang his subordinate, the Archbishop Salviati, and put to death his hired agents, Montesecco and his companions. He promptly declared war against Florence, and induced the King of Naples[1] and other states to join him. He confiscated the Medici bank in Rome, and sent an envoy to the Florentine State to demand that Lorenzo should be surrendered to his vengeance. The reply of the Signoria is significant:—"You say that Lorenzo is a tyrant, and command us to expel him; but how are we free if thus compelled to obey your commands? You call him tyrant: the majority of the Florentines call him their defender."

But the Pope did more than declare war: he excommunicated the entire Tuscan state. The

[1] English writers constantly speak of Ferdinand, King of Naples, and Ferrante, King of Naples, as though these were two different men, which is not the case. The two forms of the name are used indiscriminately by the Italian writers of the time.

document drawn up by Sixtus IV. on this occasion is a curiosity in this kind of literature.[1] In it he anathematised, not only Lorenzo (whom he styled "the child of iniquity and the nursling of perdition"), but also the Gonfaloniere and all the members of the Signoria of Florence. The complete unrighteousness of the act is manifest. Because his criminal attempt had failed, and because the Government of a neighbouring State had executed those who had murdered their ruler's brother, attempted to murder himself, and endeavoured treacherously to seize their country, therefore the people of that country were to be visited with a penalty in spiritual affairs. It was a travesty of the whole meaning of excommunication.

Thus was the greater part of Italy[2] stirred up to attack Lorenzo, who justly remarked that his "only fault was that he had not been murdered." But the temper of the Florentines was thoroughly roused; no submission was thought of; and Florence prepared herself for a serious war against the whole power which the Pope was able to bring to bear. And here occurred a remarkable incident, interesting as showing how the temper of men's minds was changing, and as a forerunner of the Reformation, now fast approaching in the next generation.

At the period on which we are now entering corruption and vice were being spread over Europe from Rome as a centre. The Church at large

[1] It will be found published in full in the *Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent*, by Roscoe, who calls it "one of the most extraordinary specimens of priestly arrogance that ever insulted the common-sense of mankind."

[2] The Pope managed to deprive Florence of her former ally Milan, which, afraid of Papal censures, remained neutral, as did also Venice.

cried out against it, but none could see from whence any reform could come. Thus we find a preacher of the Order of St Dominic, preaching in the year 1484, saying:—"The world cries out for a Council; but how can one be obtained in the present state of the heads of the Church? No human power avails any longer to reform the Church through a Council, and God Himself must come to our aid in some way unknown to us." But in a way undreamt of by the preacher that aid was already on the road. The "New Learning" was slowly but surely leading men up to that great movement which was to reform the Church.

Writings of the long past, unearthed chiefly through the labours of the Medici in the cause of Learning, were beginning to be the common property of all men. And the result was like a revelation to the men of that age. They learnt when and how the claims of the Papacy had originated; how often and how effectively they had in the early centuries been repudiated by the Church; how those claims themselves had gradually become far more wide and sweeping in character than when at first tentatively put forward; and how in many instances they had only made their way owing to the political circumstances of Europe.

But men learnt more even than this. As these researches of scholars into the writings of the past proceeded it began to be seen that an immense falsehood had been perpetrated. "There loomed before men's eyes the most gigantic fraud which the world has ever seen."[1] In the latter half

[1] *Italy and her Invaders*, by Professor Hodgkin.

of the fifteenth century, men gradually learnt that, whereas these Papal claims had for centuries been based upon three great historical documents, these were all of them from end to end colossal forgeries, concocted in the Roman Curia during the darkness of the eighth and ninth centuries —the forged *Donation of Constantine*, the forged *Donation of Pepin*, and that which has obtained in history the name of *The Forged Decretals*— all three now acknowledged by all Europe (including the Church of Rome itself) to have been what the scholars of the Renaissance found them out to be, viz., forgeries. None, in fact, possessed of any scholarship could read them without at once seeing that they were so, their historical errors and inconsistencies being so gross; but they had sufficed for their purpose during an illiterate age. This huge fraud had misled the whole of western Europe from the eighth to the fifteenth century, and the entire Papal edifice was erected thereon.

"And then," says a modern historian, "came a scholar of the Renaissance, Laurentius Valla,[1] and uttered a few words of caustic comment, . . . and pricked the bubble which had befooled the world for seven centuries, and the Djin shrank back into the bottle, and was hurled into the depths of the sea."[2]

It was as though—nay, far more than as though —Magna Charta were found to be a forgery.

[1] Laurentius Valla was a native of Pistoia, and became a professor of law at Pavia. He critically examined the so-called *Donation of Constantine*, and pronounced it to be an obvious forgery, and openly declared that the Popes "had no right to their position." Professor Villari says:—"To him we owe the thorough demolition of the false document."

[2] Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders*, ix. 273.

The pricking of this great "bubble," joined to all the other knowledge which the "New Learning" supplied, was bound, when time had elapsed for the information to spread over the countries of northern Europe, to bring about the Reformation. For as soon as it became known to most educated men that the entire Papal claim was based upon a colossal fraud, the revolt of other national Churches from the usurped supremacy of the Church of Rome was a certainty. But that time was not yet; as yet we are only at the stage when these things were becoming known to a considerable number of men in Tuscany, and at an incident which was but a local and temporary forerunner of the great convulsion. It is an incident little known, but whose importance is shown by the strenuous efforts subsequently made by the Church of Rome to destroy all trace of it. On receipt of the Pope's bull of excommunication the whole of the Tuscan bishops assembled in council in the cathedral of Florence, justified the action of the State, and not only appealed to a General Council against the interdict, but *excommunicated the Pope.*

Nor was there anything irregular in this action of the Church of Tuscany. It was an action which went back to the times when, had any bishop acted as Sixtus IV. had done, the Churches of other parts of Christendom would have refused to hold communion with him, or with his Church, until it had purged itself of such a bishop. And it was only from the long ignorance which had reigned in these matters that the bold action of the Church of Tuscany took men's breath away.

And if we enquire where the Tuscan Church got the idea of action which had been unknown in Europe for more than eight centuries, the answer is plain. It was undoubtedly Tuscany's "New Learning" which emboldened the Church of Tuscany to take the course it did, strong in the knowledge that it was on solid ground in taking action which any appeal to the early centuries of the life of the Catholic Church would substantiate.

But the Church of Tuscany did not stop here. It made use of the newly-discovered art of printing,[1] and printed its sentence of excommunication of the Pope, and distributed copies thereof to the other national Churches of Europe. This to a world accustomed to tremble at a Pope's censures seemed a still more terrible act of lawlessness. But nothing daunted Tuscany. The whole of the clergy held with their bishops, and the Papal excommunication was treated as a dead letter throughout that State.[2]

In the war which followed Florence was greatly overmatched. She had to face a powerful combination including not only Rome and Naples, but also both of her two ancient rivals, Siena and Lucca, besides Urbino and other minor states, the Pope exerting all his power to make all states

[1] The first printing press established in Florence had been set up there one year previously (*see* footnote to p. 272).

[2] The Papal authorities subsequently hunted out and destroyed all copies of the document published by the Church of Tuscany (entitled *Contrascommunica del clero Fiorentino fulminata contro il sommo Pontefice Sisto IV.*) on which they could lay their hands. With the result that in after years it came to be questioned whether so remarkable a sentence as that of the Tuscan bishops had ever been promulgated. But the learned historian and antiquary, Lami (1697-1770), has placed the matter beyond all doubt, he having himself seen copies of the document which still existed in his time.

join him. Florence was repeatedly defeated in the field, and lost town after town. At length, after nearly two years' fighting, the position being most gloomy, Lorenzo took a remarkable step. Leaving the conduct of affairs in the hands of the Gonfaloniere, Tommaso Soderini, he set out by himself for Naples, to try diplomacy instead of force of arms: thus putting himself into the hands of his enemy in the hope of thereby saving his country. It was a dangerous step, for the Pope was as vindictive as ever, and all knew the unreliable character of King Ferrante of Naples.[1] On his way to Pisa, Lorenzo wrote to the Signoria, explaining his object thus:—

"In the dangerous circumstances in which our city is placed it was more necessary to act than to deliberate. . . . I therefore mean, with your permission, to proceed directly to Naples, conceiving that as I am the person chiefly aimed at by our enemies, I may, by delivering myself into their hands, perhaps be the means of restoring peace to my fellow-citizens."[2]

In reply he received from the Signoria a letter conferring on him official authority to negotiate with the King of Naples.

Sailing from the little port of Vada, in the Maremma, Lorenzo reached Naples on the 18th December. There his charm of manner, combined with the masterly sketch which he set before the King of the politics of Italy—showing him the precariousness of Ludovico Sforza's position

[1] "No reliance could be placed on the word or clemency of the man who had enticed Piccinino to Naples, and caused him to be secretly murdered."—(Hyett.)

[2] Roscoe i. 220.

at Milan, the unreliability of Venice, the changing policy of the Papacy which varied with each new Pope, and that the friendship of none was so valuable to him as that of Florence—soon worked so great a change that the enmity of King Ferrante was turned into friendship.[1] And the final result was a treaty in which Florence regained her lost territories. Lorenzo returned in triumph to Florence in March 1480 with a perfect ovation, the people embracing each other for joy, the citizens declaring that his tact and personal influence had proved stronger than all the military force of the enemy, and that all that had been lost in war had been recovered by his wisdom and judgment. The Pope raged furiously and did his utmost to continue the war, but one ally after another withdrew from him, and eventually he had to give in, remove his interdict, and make peace with Florence.[2]

This return in triumph, bringing "peace with honour" where all had been so gloomy when he went away, was always considered by the Florentines the chief event of Lorenzo's life. And just as Botticelli had immortalised the roseate joys of those earlier years, before the tragedy of the Pazzi Conspiracy put an end to them and brought storm and trouble, so now the same painter immortalised the triumph of these sterner years. This Botticelli (always allegorical) does by his picture of *Pallas subduing the Centaur*,[3] now in

[1] In this result Lorenzo's long-standing friendship from boyhood with Federigo, the King's second son, and with Ippolita, Duchess of Calabria, whom he had known when she was Ippolita Sforza, much assisted him.

[2] *See* also p. 259.

[3] Plate XXII.

the Pitti Palace, one of the most admired of his pictures. The centaur, emblem of crime and war, and typifying the iniquitous Pazzi Conspiracy and the unrighteous war brought upon Florence as its result, cowers before the victorious Goddess of Wisdom, who, with Lorenzo's private crest of the interlaced diamond rings covering her dress, and wreathed with *laurel*, turns her back on the bay of Naples, and setting her face towards the hill country of Tuscany leads the spirit of war captive;[1] thus representing the triumph of wisdom and peace in the person of Lorenzo, and the honour accorded to him by a grateful country.[2]

In this manner did Lorenzo weather the storm which came upon him when he was thirty years old, through the double trial of the formidable conspiracy to murder him and the disastrous war which grew out of it. We get a glimpse of how severely it had tried him from his words when apologising for turning to literature as a relaxation in the midst of much trouble of mind. He writes:—

"I shall therefore only say that my sufferings have been very severe, the authors of them having been men of great authority and talents, and fully determined to accomplish, by every means in their power, my total ruin. Whilst I, on the other hand, having nothing to oppose to these formidable enemies but youth and inexperience (saving, indeed, the assistance which I received from Divine goodness), was reduced to such an extreme of misfortune that I had at one and the same time to labour under the excommunication of my soul,

[1] The large jar which she carries is probably meant to signify the arts of peace.

[2] This picture after being lost for many years was rediscovered in 1894 by the late Mr W. Spence, being found rolled up and hidden away in a disused apartment of the Pitti Palace.

ALLEGORICAL PICTURE REPRESENTING THE TRIUMPH OF LORENZO OVER HIS ENEMIES, AND CALLED "PALLAS SUBDUING THE CENTAUR."

By Botticelli.

Brogi] [*Pitti Palace.*

and the dispersion of my property,[1] to contend with endeavours to divest me of my authority in the State,[2] to meet attempts to introduce discord into my family,[3] and to sustain frequent plots to deprive me of my life;[4] insomuch that I should at one time have thought death itself a less evil than those with which I had to contend. In this unfortunate situation it is surely not to be wondered at if I endeavoured to alleviate my anxiety by turning to more agreeable subjects of meditation."

This great diplomatic victory was the turning-point in Lorenzo's career. Up to this time he had not gained that autocratic power which he sought;[5] but from this moment it was entirely his. The Florentines were ready to accord any honour to the man who had first defended their country from seizure by an unscrupulous Roman despot and from subjugation to the latter's tyrannical rule, and then, though overmatched in strength, had foiled all that enemy's attacks and restored peace without any loss of territory. Lorenzo might undoubtedly, if he would, at this juncture have made himself sovereign ruler of Florence in name as well as in fact. But he knew his countrymen too well to do so, knowing that all his popularity would wane if he adopted that position; and he had the wisdom to be content with the power, without the insignia, of

[1] Referring to the Pope having confiscated the Medici bank in Rome, which caused Lorenzo severe loss.

[2] Referring to the intrigues which throughout the war were sedulously instigated by the Riario to undermine Lorenzo's influence with his countrymen.

[3] By drawing the husband of his favourite sister into a plot against his life, by which her affection as a wife and as a sister became opposed.

[4] Girolamo Riario made two other attempts on Lorenzo's life (*see* vol. ii. p. 187).

[5] Chap. viii. p. 209.

sovereignty. The kind of rule which he established — that combination of an autocracy with a democracy — will always be held in disfavour by political theorists; but the practical results proved its entire correctness. The prosperity and power of Florence went up with a bound; every state desired alliance with her; while foreign courts eagerly sought Lorenzo's advice and assistance. Even the Sultan was impressed by his importance, and sent him costly presents, among other things a giraffe, which must have been somewhat of an embarrassment in Florence. At the same time Florence's commerce immensely increased, her ships, built in her port of Pisa, trading to the Black Sea, Asia Minor, Africa, Spain, England, France, and Flanders. And with the spread of her commerce increased also her influence as the centre of Art and Learning.[1] The pride which the Florentines took in all this is brought home to us when we find Giovanni Rucellai, in detailing in his memoirs a long list of personal benefits for which he desires to offer up thanks to the Almighty, amongst them thanking God that he "was a native of Florence, the greatest city in the world, and lived in the days of the magnificent Medici."

Contemporary historical events. 1469-1480.

During the first eleven years of Lorenzo's rule the chief events in other countries were as follows:—

In France from 1468 to 1477 Louis XI. was mainly occupied in a long struggle with Charles

[1] "Florence at peace, and the calm studious heads
Come out again, the penetrating eyes;
As if a spell broke, all resumed
Each art you boast."—BROWNING.

the Bold, the great Duke of Burgundy. The latter was in every way the reverse of his mean and crafty antagonist, and a far nobler spirit, while his wise reforms for the good of his country, and his strong and enlightened government, made him the leading ruler of his time. The struggle between him and Louis XI. continued with varying success until in 1477 Charles the Bold was killed at the battle of Nanci. He left an only child, Mary of Burgundy, who inherited all her father's immense territories. Meanwhile Louis XI., having exterminated all the greater nobles in France, had destroyed the feudal system in that country, and in its place had established a standing army. This was the first standing army created in Europe, and its possession in an age when nothing of the kind existed in any other country greatly increased Louis XI.'s strength.

In Germany the Emperor Frederick III. succeeded in 1477 in arranging a marriage between his son Maximilian, Archduke of Austria, and Mary of Burgundy, the sole heiress of Charles the Bold, by which Austria gained an accession of territory extending from Holland to Switzerland. This marriage caused a great change in the state of Europe; to it is due the rise of the house of Austria, and we are told "it begins the era of the larger politics of modern times." In this matter Louis XI. entirely overreached himself. The rich and extensive territories which Mary of Burgundy inherited stretched along the most exposed frontier of France. By a continued course of elaborate intrigues, Louis, while amusing

the young Duchess with a proposal for a marriage with his son, the Dauphin, which he never intended to carry out, sent troops into her country, corrupted its leading men and then betrayed them to execution, played every one false in turn, and was rapidly seizing her whole territory. To save themselves from him, the States of Flanders secretly negotiated with the Emperor for the above marriage between their young sovereign, Mary, and his son; and in 1478, six months after her father's death, Mary of Burgundy gave herself and all her wide territories to the young Maximilian, and Louis XI., to his great disgust, had to disgorge.

In England the Wars of the Roses still continued, debarring that country from taking any part in the politics of Europe.

In Spain in 1469 (the year that Lorenzo's rule in Florence began) took place the marriage between Ferdinand, King of Arragon, and Isabella, Queen of Castile, whereby for the first time Spain entered as one country into European politics, this marriage uniting the northern half of that country, though the Moors still held the southern portion.

In Milan, after the death in 1476 of the Duke Galeazzo Sforza, his Duchess, Bona of Savoy, governed for a time on behalf of her young son. In 1480, however, her late husband's brother, Ludovico Sforza (commonly known as "Il Moro," owing to his swarthy complexion), managed to banish her, placed her twelve-year-old son, Gian Galeazzo, on the throne, and proceeded to govern in his name. And as Il Moro failed to continue the policy of his father and brother in maintaining

a close friendship with Florence, this made a material difference to Lorenzo the Magnificent in his labours to preserve the balance of power in Italy.

In southern Italy in 1480, just after Lorenzo had concluded his treaty of peace with Naples, Mahomed II., who after his capture of Constantinople in 1453 had subdued in succession Servia, Bosnia, Albania, and Greece, proceeded to extend his conquests to Italy, and attacked and captured Otranto, massacring the inhabitants. This capture of Otranto by the Turks created great consternation in Italy, and was a principal inducement to Sixtus IV. to conclude the peace with Florence already noted. Florence agreed to maintain a fleet of fifteen galleys for employment against the Turks until they should be expelled from Italy.

Lorenzo the Magnificent. 1480-1484.

For the next four years after his peace with Naples and the Pope, Lorenzo was continuously occupied in striving to create a general peace in Italy. Sixtus IV., still endeavouring to seize upon various states for his nephew Girolamo, kept Italy in a constant state of war, in which Milan, Venice, Ferrara, and Naples were all involved; but Lorenzo succeeded in keeping Florence out of it, though for some time his labours to bring all states to peace were without success.

In 1482 Lorenzo's mother, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, died. She had lived to see her elder son's triumph over the cruel enemies who had slain her younger son, and to witness the former's growing power as

"the needle of the Italian compass." In the many troubles and anxieties of the previous four years Lorenzo had received much counsel and support from her, and he felt her death greatly. Speaking of it, he says:—"I have lost not only my mother, but my one refuge from many of my troubles, a comfort in my labours, and one who saved me from many of those labours."

In 1483 Lorenzo's second son, Giovanni, though only seven years old, was admitted to minor orders with a view to training him for high office in the Church. And at the same time Louis XI., with whom Lorenzo's influence had now become great, conferred on Giovanni (in accordance with a bad, though not infrequent, custom of the age) the Archbishopric of Aix in Provence. It is curious, and illustrative of the prevailing views on such points, in reading Lorenzo's own account of the matter in his memoirs, to note how he evidently saw nothing incongruous in the matter. He says:—

"On the 19th May we received the intelligence that the King of France had presented to my son, Giovanni, the abbey of Fontedolce. On the 31st we heard from Rome that the Pope had confirmed the grant, and had rendered him capable of holding a benefice, he being now seven years of age. On the 1st of June Giovanni accompanied me from Poggio a Caiano to Florence, where he was confirmed by the Bishop of Arezzo in the chapel of our family,[1] and received the tonsura; and from

[1] Presumably this refers to the *Cappella Medici* in Santa Croce, built for Cosimo Pater Patriae by Michelozzo, and from time to time enriched by the family with many beautiful works, including panel paintings by the artists of the school of Giotto, and various fine works of Mino da Fiesole and Luca della Robbia, some of which still remain.

thenceforth was called 'Messire Giovanni.' The next day we returned to Poggio. On the 8th June arrived advices from the King of France that he had conferred upon Messire Giovanni the Archbishopric of Aix in Provence."[1]

In 1484, all states except the Pope being weary of the war, Lorenzo's efforts were at length successful, and a peace was concluded at Bagnolo between Naples, Milan, and Venice. The news of it greatly enraged Sixtus IV., who was then seriously ill; we are told that on hearing of it he "became speechless with fury"; and (it has been said owing to this cause) on the following day, to the relief of all Italy, he died. He was succeeded by Innocent VIII. (Giambattista Cibò); and this caused a great improvement in Lorenzo's position. For, whereas Sixtus IV. had been the bitter enemy of the Medici, with Innocent VIII. it was exactly the reverse. He was much impressed with the political influence of Lorenzo, and considered it very desirable to keep on good terms with the powerful ruler of Tuscany, a policy which he steadily maintained throughout his eight years' pontificate.

[1] Giovanni was, of course, not "made an archbishop," as Trollope and others have said. Moreover, it is sufficiently evident that he could not be made such by the King of France. He was, as Lorenzo's letter says, admitted to minor orders (by receiving the tonsure) and "rendered capable of holding a benefice." The tonsure was given to all persons performing minor offices about the church (readers, acolytes, etc.), and did not involve any pledge to proceed to holy orders afterwards; and, as a matter of fact, Giovanni was not ordained a priest until after his election as Pope. What happened when he was seven years old was that he was rendered capable of receiving the income of an abbey and an archbishopric, a deputy performing the duties. This abuse was common in that age, and Montalembert, in his *Monks of the West*, speaks of it as one of the chief causes of the disorders in the French Church before the Revolution.

Contemporary historical events. 1480-1490.

In 1481 the united power of the states of Italy, with the Kings of Arragon, of Portugal, and of Hungary, was put forth to retake Otranto from the Turks; and upon the receipt of news, while the siege was proceeding, of the death of Mahomed II. Otranto capitulated.

In Spain Ferdinand and Isabella began in 1481 to drive out the Moors from the southern half of the country, a war which was to last for the next eleven years.

In England in 1483 Edward IV. died, the boy Edward V. was murdered by his uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and the latter became king. Two years later Richard III. was himself killed at the battle of Bosworth, and Henry VII. gained the throne, putting an end to the long period of civil war which England had endured for thirty years.

In France Louis XI. also died in 1483, and was succeeded by his son, Charles VIII. The latter was a boy of thirteen, of weak health and small capacity. Louis XI., however, when dying entrusted to his eldest daughter, Anne of Beaujeu (married to the Duke of Bourbon), the guardianship of her young brother and the rule of the kingdom during his minority; and for the next nine years she governed in his name. She displayed a high intelligence and many remarkable qualities, her nobility of character, justice, and prudence gradually overcoming the ill-will of her brother, the opposition of the French nobles, and the schemes of Maximilian of Austria, and obtaining for her the name of "Madame la Grande." Under her wise methods of government the prosperity of

France greatly increased; while it was she who enabled Henry VII. to gain the throne of England.

Lorenzo the Magnificent. 1484-1492.

From the year 1480 Lorenzo the Magnificent[1] remained for the rest of his life undisturbed by dissensions in Florence, and was able to devote himself, especially after the general peace in Italy brought about in 1484, to those arts of peace which were so much more congenial to him than war. Not that his beloved studies were neglected even in the midst of war or the most pressing anxieties. In a letter to Ficino, he says:—

"When my mind is disturbed with the tumults of public business, and my ears are stunned with the clamours of turbulent citizens, how would it be possible for me to support such contentions unless I found a relaxation in Learning?"

Ammirato says:—

"Being now completely free from foreign disturbances, and having perfect quiet at home, he devoted himself to the pleasures and elegancies of peace, occupying himself in the patronage of literature, in book-collecting, in beautifying the city, in bringing into cultivation the surrounding country, and in all those pursuits and studies which have made that age remarkable."

And notwithstanding all the accusations of "despotism" made against Lorenzo, it is impossible not to notice that at no other time in Florence's history was she not only so respected abroad, but also so peaceful, prosperous, and contented at home. Which clearly shows that the form of government established by him was that which

[1] Plate XXIII.

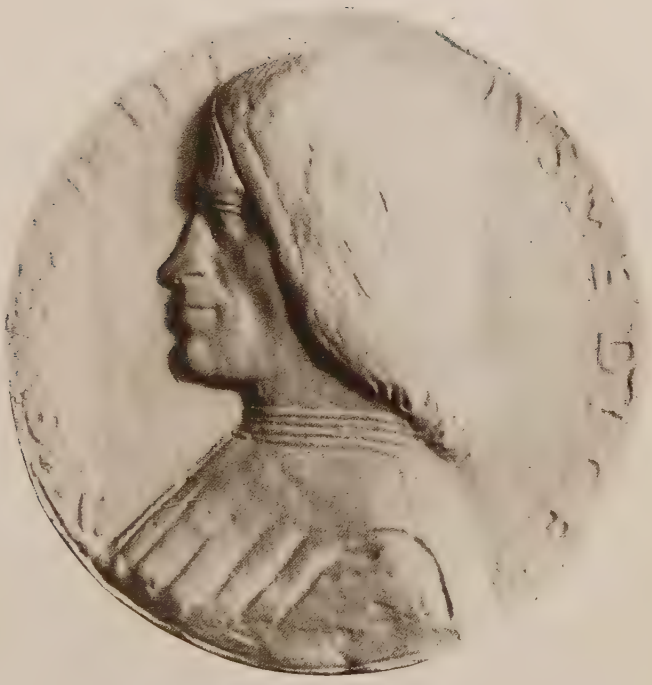
ensured the maximum of happiness to the greatest number. It has also been remarked that "the civil equality to which we are accustomed in modern states, but which was quite unknown to the Europe of that age, was by no means unknown to Tuscany in the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent": which seems sufficiently to show that any "despotism" on his part could scarcely have been of a very stringent character.[1] Nor did political affairs, literature, and art absorb the whole of Lorenzo's attention, for under his rule "all industries, commerce, and public works made enormous progress."[2] And in after times the Florentines always looked back to the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent as the happiest and most prosperous period of their history. Nor was this confined only to Florence. Guicciardini commences his celebrated history with the remark that the time of Lorenzo was a season "prosperous beyond any other which Italy had experienced during the long course of a thousand years"; and after a long panegyric on its then happy state, says that this "was by general consent ascribed to the industry and virtue of Lorenzo de' Medici." At the same time in the wider field of European politics Lorenzo became recognised by all sovereigns as the leading man in Italy, and in the Florentine archives may be seen letters to him from Henry VII. of England and Louis XI. of France, in which both of them address him as an equal, and in the style of a reigning monarch.

But the task of maintaining the peace of Italy,

[1] Those who under other circumstances would have been the leaders of faction-fighting naturally called Lorenzo's rule a tyranny. But we find even Savonarola declared by his opponents to have made himself "tyrant of Florence." (Villari's *Savonarola*, ii. 71.)

[2] Guicciardini.

PLATE XXIII.



LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT AT THE AGE OF FORTY.
Medallion by Antonio Pollajuolo.

Burton]

MADDALENA, ELDEST DAUGHTER OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.

From a Picture now lost.

which had devolved upon Lorenzo, was one which taxed all his powers, and it is hard to understand how he found time as he did for all those pursuits which Ammirato mentions. Naples, the Pope, and Milan were only kept from war with the greatest difficulty. Nor was this all. Among the smaller states there existed a chronic condition of feud which required incessant watchfulness on Lorenzo's part in order, by skilful intervention, to prevent it from developing into actual war. He watched over the smallest matters in the politics of other states which might affect, however remotely, the welfare of Florence. Conflicting interests, mutual distrust, and veiled animosity made Italian politics of that time a perfect labyrinth of intrigue. And nowhere is the consummate statesmanship of Lorenzo more apparent than in those portions of his correspondence showing the masterly manner in which he dealt with the complex situations called forth by these conditions, and demonstrating the successful results which he achieved.[1] But all this was not done without a strain upon his powers of mind and body which told severely upon him. So that we can well understand the wish that he expressed that he could bury himself for six months in some place where no rumour of Italian affairs could reach his ears.

In 1484 Florence was drawn into a desultory war with Genoa, and took Pietrasanta; and in 1487 Lorenzo himself conducted an expedition against Sarzana (which had been captured from Florence during the war of 1478-1480), and retook that town: an act which still further increased his popularity, as the loss of Sarzana had been deeply felt by the Florentines. In August 1487,

[1] *See* p. 270.

while Lorenzo was absent at the baths of Filetta, whither he had gone owing to his increasing attacks of gout, his wife, Clarice,[1] died, at thirty-four. She died somewhat suddenly, and he heard of her death before he knew that she was ill.

In 1488 Pope Innocent VIII., impressed with Lorenzo's growing importance, desired a marriage between one of his sons,[2] Francesco Cibò, and one of Lorenzo's daughters: a significant sign of the extent to which this citizen family were rising in worldly estimation. Lorenzo gave him his eldest daughter, Maddalena.[3] They were married on the 20th January 1488. An episode in connection with this marriage gives us a glimpse of the simplicity of the domestic life in the Medici Palace. It is related that when Francesco Cibò came with a very grand retinue from Rome for this marriage[4] he and his suite were splendidly lodged and luxuriously entertained in a separate palace; but after three days Cibò himself went to stay at the Medici Palace with his future father-in-law. There, astonished at the simple style of living, so different from what he had been accustomed to in the Papal palace at Rome, as well as from that which his own retinue were receiving elsewhere, he thought that an insult was being put upon him. It was then explained to him that it was no insult, but the very reverse; that the luxurious entertain-

[1] Plate XVIII. (p. 208).

[2] Roscoe says: — "Before adopting an ecclesiastical life Giambattista Cibò was married and had several children, the eldest of whom, Francesco Cibò, was married to Maddalena, Lorenzo's daughter."

[3] Plate XXIV. This portrait of Lorenzo's eldest daughter is specially interesting because both the picture and the negative from which the photograph of it was taken are now lost. The plain style of her dress is very noticeable.

[4] Or perhaps rather for the betrothal; the actual marriage took place at Rome.

ment was kept for those who were guests, but that now he was admitted, no longer as a guest, but as one of the family.

In the same year Lorenzo married (22nd May 1488) his eldest son, Pietro, then seventeen,[1] to Alfonsina Orsini, another of that same proud Roman family from whom his own wife had come. Judging from their after results, as represented in Clarice Orsini's son Pietro, and Alfonsina Orsini's son Lorenzo, these two Roman marriages were not at all advantageous to the Medici family.

In 1489[2] Lorenzo attained a desire which he had much at heart. Though only forty, his health was already failing from hereditary gout. His eldest son, Pietro, showed signs of a careless and arrogant disposition, which did not promise well for his success as a ruler of Florence. Lorenzo was therefore anxious to create a second prop to the family fortunes, so that if Pietro should fail, Giovanni, his second son, might be able to retrieve the failure. If he could get the latter made a cardinal the family wealth and influence would probably, eventually, carry him to the Papal throne: when the family fortunes would be assured. It was therefore a great satis-

[1] A portrait of Pietro at the age of seventeen is to be seen in the copy of Homer printed in 1488 (now in the National Library of the Uffizi), and given to Pietro on the occasion of his marriage (*see* vol. ii. p. 443).

[2] In this same year Filippo Strozzi (the elder) began to build a new palace for his family, the present Strozzi Palace. He relates how he had a careful horoscope drawn out, and in accordance with it laid the foundation-stone at sunrise on the 6th August 1489. Though inferior in its architecture to the palace of the Medici, built sixty years before, it followed the general style of the latter. It was designed by Benedetto da Maiano, an artist who had by this time gained a considerable reputation both as a sculptor and an architect.

faction to Lorenzo when by his influence with Innocent VIII. he, in this year, though Giovanni was only thirteen, succeeded in getting the latter created a cardinal, the youngest there had ever been.[1]

In 1490 there began in Florence the preaching of the man who was in a few years to become the chief power among the Florentines. Savonarola, a native of Ferrara, had taken up as a special mission the task of recalling the inhabitants of the cities of Italy from their luxurious and profligate ways. He had preached this message first at Florence, as the most important city at that time in Italy; but, unable to get the Florentines to listen to his exhortations, he had departed for several years to preach the same message at Brescia, Reggio, Genoa, and other places. And it was Lorenzo who, in this year 1490, recalled him to preach again his message of reform in Florence. And this fact should be borne in mind as counterbalancing the baseless statements so often made as to Lorenzo having led the Florentines into profligacy. Nor even when Savonarola's preaching was aimed against himself did Lorenzo resent it. Preaching against the prevailing licentiousness of the times, Savonarola, in predicting the downfall of the various states of Italy before a foreign conqueror, unless a general reformation of morals took place, included among the dynasties who were thus to fall, not only the King of Naples, the Sforza at Milan, the Este at Ferrara, and the occupant of the Papal throne, but also the Medici at Florence. Yet Lorenzo showed no

[1] The Pope stipulated that in view of Giovanni's age it should remain a secret for three years; though it soon became an open one.

resentment, and took no steps to stop this preaching, though his paramount influence with Pope Innocent VIII. would have enabled him at any moment to procure Savonarola's removal. In the following year Lorenzo gave a further example of worthy command over himself. In that year Savonarola was elected prior of the monastery of San Marco, the monastery which had been entirely built and endowed by the Medici. It was consequently customary for the prior on being elected to pay a complimentary visit to the head of the Medici family. Yet when Savonarola, deeming this a worldly and unseemly custom, declined to observe it, Lorenzo treated the discourtesy with dignified forbearance, only saying with a smile: "See now! here is a stranger who has come into my house and will not deign even to visit me." Nevertheless he showed good-will to the prior, often attended his services, and gave as liberally as heretofore to San Marco.

During these two years, 1490 and 1491, Lorenzo was greatly harassed by the quarrel between the King of Naples and the Pope, and by the strenuous labour it involved on his part to keep them from coming to an open rupture. King Ferrante persistently evaded compliance with the terms of the treaty which he had made with the Pope in 1486, and Lorenzo had to exert all his powers of persuasion with Innocent VIII. to prevent him from endeavouring to enforce it. At length, however, in February 1492 Lorenzo's efforts to bring them to a better understanding were successful, and they agreed to a mutual settlement of their differences, which set this matter at last at rest.

This completed Lorenzo's work for the maintenance of peace in Italy. He had in twenty-two years perfected that which his grandfather had begun, and created between Venice, Milan, the Pope, and Naples, a firm balance of power which so long as his influence watched over it would keep Italy at peace. But Lorenzo had done more than this, and to protect Florence from the miseries of war had created a more permanent safeguard, one undreamt of by Cosimo. Instead of the chronic enmity with her neighbours which had hitherto always been Florence's condition, Lorenzo—a master in conciliatory action—had in the course of twenty-two years gradually established friendly relations with Siena, Lucca, Bologna, Faenza, Ferrara, Rimini, Perugia, and Città di Castello: thus encircling Florence with a ring of friendly states—a more lasting guarantee for her peace than even a general balance of power. These achievements had brought Italy to that condition referred to by Guicciardini as the most prosperous experienced for a thousand years, and had made Lorenzo recognised even beyond the Alps as the leading statesman of his age.

Literature. 1469-1492.

But Lorenzo the Magnificent has a greater claim to fame than any which is derived from his achievements in the political sphere. It is in the domain of Learning and Art that his chief honour will ever rest; and the former especially was the main interest of his life.

However much controversy may rage round the deeds of the Medici, there is one cause in

regard to which it will be difficult to deny that they have deserved unstinted honour and gratitude from Europe at large,—that of the *resuscitation of Learning*.[1] And in particular for their rescue, at great cost to themselves, of a mass of invaluable literary treasures belonging to the classic age, just in time before the spread of Turkish misrule over all the eastern countries of Europe after the fall of Constantinople had time to work its natural effects. For a very few decades of Turkish dominion over these countries would have caused all those treasures to disappear for ever. Carried out by four generations, there were in this matter two stages. The time of Lorenzo, notwithstanding all the enthusiasm of the brilliant *coterie* he gathered round him, can scarcely be called "a time of learning," such as that which followed it in the time of Leo X., Erasmus, and the Scaligers; it was too early for that result. In the case of the first three of the four generations, the resuscitation of Learning has reference to the splendid work done in unearthing and making known the materials by which alone later generations were enabled to become times of learning. Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo did this portion of the work; it remained for Lorenzo's son, Leo X., to conduct his age to the further step of becoming a time of learning through the labours of those who had gone before.

The assistance which Lorenzo gave to this work was unbounded. Large as had been the amounts which his father and grandfather had given to this object, that which Lorenzo gave was

[1] *See* Gibbons' words (chap. iv. p. 78).

still larger. It has been computed that in the thirty-five years, from the recall of Cosimo in 1434 to the death of Piero in 1469, the family, over and above what they spent in the search for and rescue of manuscript books from the East, had given from their private fortune for the public benefit in the shape of institutions to assist Learning and similar objects a sum equal, in our present money, to nearly £3,000,000 sterling. To this Lorenzo's own expenditure on the same object has to be added; and some idea of its extent may be formed from the amount which he gave annually for books alone. Mr Walter Scaife says:—

"Allowing for the difference in the value of money, Lorenzo's annual expenditure *for books alone* amounted to from £65,000 to £75,000 sterling. He sent the celebrated Giovanni Lascaris twice to the Orient for the express purpose of discovering and purchasing ancient manuscripts. On his second voyage Lascaris brought back two hundred Greek works, as many as eighty of which were not up to that time even known."[1]

But this was only one item in the process. Not only had such manuscript books to be searched for in Eastern countries, but to be of any use in the spread of Learning, copies of them had to be multiplied; and so an army of copyists[2]

[1] *Florentine Life during the Renaissance*, by Walter Scaife.

[2] Florence (owing to the feeling of disdain for printed, as compared with manuscript, books which prevailed amongst scholars) was the last of the great cities to establish a printing press, being surpassed even by London. Following Mayence in 1450, Naples established printing in 1465, Rome in 1467, Venice and Milan in 1469, Paris, Nuremberg, and Verona in 1470, and London (under the auspices of Caxton) in 1476. And it was not until 1477 that Florence produced a printed book, brought out by the printing press set up by Bernardo Cennini. In Mayence the *Gothic* type was used; the *Roman* type was introduced by Seveynheim and Pannartz at Rome in 1467; and the *Italic* by Aldus Manutius at Venice in 1500.

were maintained by Lorenzo for this purpose and kept constantly at work. Then, again, there were colleges and other similar institutions to be founded for the assistance of those who had the scholar's instinct but could not afford the necessary books, or the expense of their own maintenance while studying. Among other institutions of this kind, Lorenzo founded the University of Pisa, which, by his liberality to it, he made the most celebrated university of that time in Europe, except that at Florence. When he was only twenty-three (during the time when he and Giuliano were chiefly renowned for their splendid pageants and festivities) he went, at the latter end of 1472, to Pisa to found this university, and stayed there a long time employed on this work, himself taking the direction of the new university. The State gave an annual grant to it of 6,000 florins, but as this was altogether inadequate, Lorenzo gave, to supplement it, more than double that amount out of his private fortune, and by this means obtained for its professors some of the most eminent scholars of the age. But his work at Florence in this direction was still greater; it was at Florence, and in the cause of the Greek language and literature, that the labours of Lorenzo on behalf of Learning culminated. Roscoe tells us that, "while the University of Pisa was for the study of the Latin language and those branches of science of which it was the principal vehicle, it was at Florence only in all Italy that the Greek language was taught, and that there was established a public academy for Greek by means of which the knowledge of the Greek tongue was extended, not

only through all the rest of Italy, but through France, Spain, Germany, and England, from all which countries numerous students attended at Florence who diffused the learning they had there acquired through Europe."

To this Greek academy at Florence Lorenzo gave lavishly, and for its welfare laboured persistently, establishing as its professors such celebrated men as the eminent Johannes Argyropoulos, Theodorus Gaza, Demetrius Chalcondylas,[1] and others. The celebrated William Grocin (afterwards Professor of Greek at Oxford), and Thomas Linacer,[2] the first English scholars who learnt Greek, acquired it at Florence under these great teachers.

All this gives us some idea of how great was the cost of such a work as the resuscitation of Learning. And when joined to Lorenzo's large expenditure on the encouragement of Art, and on State expenses other than those for which he was reimbursed,[3] it caused even the Medici wealth to be heavily reduced; so that Lorenzo the Magnificent died a very much poorer man than his father. But it was money well spent; and his own speech on becoming head of the family, made in reference to the large amount which his father and grandfather had drawn out of the family funds to spend

[1] The first printed edition of the works of Homer was brought out at Florence in 1488, by Demetrius Chalcondylas and Demetrius Cretensis.

[2] Thomas Linacer, or Linacre, was one of the most eminent physicians and scholars of England. He was born about 1460, and was the first Englishman who studied Aristotle and Galen in the original Greek. He taught Greek at Oxford and gave lectures on physic. Henry VII. called him to court and entrusted to him the education of Prince Arthur. In 1518 Linacer became the founder of the College of Physicians in London, obtaining letters patent for it from Henry VIII. He died in 1524, and was buried in St Paul's.

[3] *See* p. 303.

on works of public utility, may be made applicable to himself:—"Some would perhaps think it would be more desirable to have a part of it in their purse; but I conceive it to have been spent to the great advantage of the public, and am therefore perfectly satisfied."

And to the very last Lorenzo's ardour in this cause of spreading a knowledge of learning remained unabated. "The ruling passion strong in death" gained another example in his case. As the two closest of his friends, Angelo Poliziano and Pico della Mirandola, stood weeping by his bedside as he breathed his last, his dying words were:—"I wish that death had spared me till I had completed your libraries."

But Lorenzo's assistance to the cause of Learning did not end here, or with help which he shared with his father and grandfather. The honour which literary men gave to him was not merely that given to a great patron whose wealth was ever at the service of Learning, but was in even greater degree the honour paid to one who was himself an author of literary work, a leader in their own sphere. It is only in recent years that it has become appreciated how high is the place taken by Lorenzo in this respect. Modern opinion, however, credits him with having more of the poetic spirit than any other man of his time, and with having been the leading poetic influence of his age. Thus the most recent authority on the subject says[1]:—

"His (Lorenzo's) sonnets and odes (*canzoni*) are of finer quality than any similar verse since

[1] *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol iii. chap. xiv. ("The Italian Renaissance," by A. J. Butler, M.A.).

the death of Petrarch; and one seems to catch in them at times an echo of the less highly finished, but also less self-conscious, work of the pre-Petrarchian age, the *dolce stil nuovo* of the expiring thirteenth century. Both he and his friend Politian had felt something of the invigorating influence of the racy Florentine folk-songs; and if Lorenzo had lived free from the entanglements of politics and state-craft, the course of *cinquecento* poetry might have taken another turn. Unfortunately the fashion was left to be set by the courtly poets by whom it was led downwards to the depths of *seicentismo*, with its conceits, its false taste, its insincere sentiment and general lack of all masculine quality."

All Lorenzo's efforts as a writer were employed to put an end to the depreciation of the Italian tongue as compared with Latin. As a boy of seventeen he had declared his belief that this was practicable. In a remarkable letter written by him in 1466 to his friend, Federigo of Naples, he defended what was then the vulgar tongue, declaring that the Tuscan language possessed all the necessary qualifications for literary use, and proving his point by examples from Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio; and he urged that the language of Tuscany, so graceful in its youth, might be made to attain still greater perfection in its maturity if only the Florentines would earnestly strive to this end. All his writings were intended to assist this object, and it is chiefly due to these efforts of his that the Italian language occupies the position it now does, instead of the lower plane on which it stood in his day.

Lorenzo's poetical writings covered a wide range. He was a devoted lover of nature and of a country life, and all the best of his works deal in some form or another with such topics. He wrote the well-known poem of the *Ambra*, a mythological poem on the building of his much-loved villa at Poggio a Caiano, the poem being named after a little island in the adjacent stream of the Ombrone, and being a description of the joys of country life and of the delightful spring-time in Tuscany; *La caccia col falcone*, the doings of a hawking party; *La nencia da Barberino*, on Tuscan peasant life, which Symonds styles "a masterpiece of true genius and humour"; *I Beoni*, a burlesque; and many other poems. "Also numerous sonnets and love-songs (poems of his youth), mostly inspired by his romantic but unimpassioned love for Lucrezia Donati."[1] Nothing came amiss to his muse; he could write with equal ease pastorals and devotional poetry, sonnets and carnival ditties, hunting songs and poems on stars and flowers; and all showing true poetical feeling.[2]

Lorenzo's writings, occupied so largely with that country life of which he was so fond, open up the pleasantest side of his character. While here, at all events, we have the satisfaction of being on ground where controversy cannot enter, since whatever a man's writings show of himself is definite and incontrovertible. Speaking of how Lorenzo's love of nature, and sympathy with the

[1] *Florence*, by F. A. Hyett.

[2] Lorenzo's well-known song, "O chiara stella, che co' raggi tuoi," has always been much admired.

feelings and life of the country people, show themselves in his poetry, Mr Armstrong says as follows:[1]—

"As examples of this may be taken the stages in the rosebud's life, from his poem *Corinto*; or, a wider theme, the annual migration of the flocks to the upland pastures. The flocks pass bleating up the mountain paths, the young lambs trotting in their mothers' steps; the one just newly born is carried in the shepherd's arms, while his fellow bears a lame sheep upon his shoulders; a third peasant is riding the mare with foal, carrying the posts and nets to guard the flocks from wolves; the dog runs to and fro proud of his post as escort to the party. Then comes a little touch of nature unidealised: the flock is shut within the nets, the shepherds fall to their meal of milk, rolls and biscuits, and then fall fearlessly asleep and snore all night. Equally well can the poet describe a winter scene:—the crackling of the leaves beneath the hunter's feet, his quarry vainly seeking to hide its tracks; the fir tree standing green against the white mountains, or bending its branches beneath its load of snow; the laurel standing young and joyous amid the dry leafless trees; the solitary bird that still finds a hiding-place in the stout cypress which is doing battle with the winds; the olive grove on a balmy, sunny shore, whose leaves show green or silver according to the setting of the wind. Lorenzo finds his materials in the troubles of life as in its joys; he enters keenly into the sufferings of the peasant and of animals; he describes one of the woodland fires common in mountain districts—a chance spark of the flint catching the dry leaves, then spreading to the brushwood, and then gaining on ancient

[1] *Lorenzo de' Medici*, by E. Armstrong, M.A.

oak and ilex, destroying the shadowy forest homes, the pleasant nests, the lairs where generations of wild things had stalled themselves, and then the wild rout of terror-stricken creatures bellowing and shrieking down the echoing dale. At another time we see the Ombrone in flood, with its turbid yellow waters grinding stone on stone, bearing along the plain its mountain spoil of trunk and bough; the peasant's wife is just in time to free, with trembling hand, the cattle from the stall. She carries pick-a-back her weeping little son; behind her is her elder daughter with the poor household store . . . the old shed floats bobbing on the water's crest. . . . It is the close observance of nature which makes Lorenzo's poetry ever fresh, whether he is describing ants or bees, or a line of cranes stretching across the sky towards a sunny spot, or the hunted deer taking its last desperate leap and the straining eyes of the baffled dogs, or the oxen struggling with their load of stones and logs, or the tired bird falling into the sea because it fears to light upon a ship."

Every one who is conversant with a sportman's life will feel how these writings of Lorenzo call up scene after scene which has come before his own eyes in the wild life of the mountains, how he is brought in sympathy with the writer, and how none but a man who was an ardent lover of nature, of animals, and of the country people, could observe and write like this.

But no picture of Lorenzo the Magnificent would be complete without notice of that brilliant inner circle of literary men who were his closest friends. Among these the chief were:—POLITIAN, who, before he was eighteen, was already renowned

for his translation of the *Iliad* into Latin, at twenty-six was lecturing to students from all countries in Europe on the Greek and Latin classics, and who, though he died at thirty-nine, was the greatest poet of his time;[1] MARSILIO FICINO, who, born in 1433 and trained by Cosimo Pater Patriae, translated Plato and many other works of the ancient writers into Latin, and became the head of the Platonic Academy; LUIGI PULCI, whose celebrated epic poem, *Il Morgante Maggiore*, is said to have been written at the request of Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Lorenzo's mother; and PICO, Count of MIRANDOLA, the most brilliant of the whole band, and celebrated throughout Europe—young, handsome, clever, lofty in character, with graceful bearing and golden hair, knowing twenty-two languages, including Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldee, and whose many attainments were the marvel of mankind. He was the most distinguished literary man of the age; Politian calls him "the Phœnix who rested in the laurel" (Lorenzo). "To him," we are told, "all knowledge and all religions were a revelation of God." Savonarola revered his memory, and in his *Triumphus Crucis*, written after Pico's death, declares that "by reason of his loftiness of intellect

[1] Symonds says that for fertility of conception and mastery of metre, Politian's Latin poems have never been surpassed by any modern writer. His full name was Angelo Ambrogini of Montepulciano, but he was always known as Poliziano. Mr Armstrong says of him:—"The classics were absorbed into his system and became a part of himself. Latin and Greek sprang naturally to his lips, there was no inward process of translation; he thought with the thoughts of the ancients. . . . Hence Politian's Latin writings live, and deserve to live. . . . His poem on the Violet, and an elegy on the death of Albiera degli Albizzi, are still treasured gems of Latin poetry."

and the sublimity of his doctrine he should be numbered amongst the miracles of God and nature." Sir Thomas More translated his letters and held him to be a saint. Lorenzo's two closest friends, Politian and Pico della Mirandola, both died soon after him, Politian at the age of thirty-nine, Pico at that of thirty-one, both of them dying in 1494.[1]

To the above four must also be added the celebrated scholar, CRISTOFORO LANDINO, who in his *Disputations* (first published about 1475) relates certain notable discussions of this group of brilliant intellects which took place when on one occasion they were gathered at Camaldoli; and VESPASIANO DA BISTICCI, "the last of the master-copyists and the first of modern booksellers," the largest employer of professional copyists in Europe, whose book, the *Lives of Illustrious Men*, is a mine of information regarding many important historical characters of the time, written by one who knew them personally.

Such were some of the men who were the chief lights in that distinguished society which Lorenzo the Magnificent created around him, a literary *coterie* probably the most brilliant in intellect which has ever been gathered together at one time and place. With such men as its members, and with such a leader, the Platonic Academy attained a brilliancy which has preserved its renown ever since. The gatherings of this society at Lorenzo's villa of Careggi, or sometimes at the

[1] Pico della Mirandola and Politian are both buried in the church of San Marco, where their monuments are to be seen one below the other.

Badia of Fiesole, or at the monastery amidst the forests of Camaldoli, produced discussions and recitations which not only revived the love of classical literature and added much to philosophical thought, but also gave birth to that Neo-Platonism, that religion of love and beauty, which absorbed into itself many diverse minds in that epoch, and was also destined to colour all the poetical literature of the succeeding centuries, so that its voice would be heard long afterwards in the poetry of Shelley and Byron, no less than in that of Ariosto and Spenser.

Art. 1469-1492.

In regard to Art, Lorenzo's encouragement was almost as great. He more than doubled the art collections[1] of the Medici Palace, and there was scarcely a contemporary painter or sculptor who was not assisted by him; while to his liberal patronage he added a universally valued critical knowledge.

The unerring *taste* in Art which the Medici as a family possessed is evidenced by the fact that no painter or sculptor of that age is to be found whose work is recognised now as of high excellence yet who was not appreciated by the Medici. They never made a mistake in such matters. To this unerring taste on their part Florence owes it that while the art collections of Rome, accumulated by the Popes, are greater in quantity, those of Florence—almost entirely the private collections

[1] In addition to the works of sculptors and painters Lorenzo's collections of works belonging to the minor arts—vases, gems, and valuable objects of art of all kinds—were immense. His collection of cameos, coins, and medallions (now in the Bargello Museum in Florence) is the oldest in Europe.

of the Medici—surpass those of Rome in quality. And no member of his family possessed this sound critical knowledge and infallible taste to so great a degree as Lorenzo the Magnificent.

As had been the case with his father, Piero, the leading artists of the day did most of their work for him, and nearly every work of eminence in painting or sculpture belonging to Lorenzo's time remaining in Florence, was commissioned by him. Verrocchio did almost all his work for him; that sculptor's graceful tomb in San Lorenzo over Lorenzo's father and uncle, his bronze *David*, and his fountain of *The boy with a dolphin*, were all executed for Lorenzo. Botticelli he made his family painter as well as friend, and all the pictures of Botticelli's second period were painted for him. It was Lorenzo who caused Ghirlandajo's frescoes in Sta. Maria Novella and Santa Trinità to be painted; and it was he who selected and sent Leonardo da Vinci to Milan to become Il Moro's great painter. Among others he also gave commissions to Filippino Lippi, Signorelli, Baldovinetti, Benedetto da Majano, Andrea del Castagno, and the Pollajuoli. The Medici Palace became, Symonds says, "a museum, at that period unique in Europe, considering the number and value of its art treasures"; and these he made available to all young artists for purposes of study. There being at that time no school for sculpture, Lorenzo formed one in his garden near San Marco, collected there casts from many antique statues, placed the school in charge of Donatello's pupil, Bertoldo, and invited all young sculptors to study there. Among those who did

so were Lorenzo di Credi, Michelangelo, and many others afterwards famous. Vasari says that every young man who studied in this garden distinguished himself. Lorenzo had an eagle eye for detecting genius, and when Michelangelo was fifteen years old[1] Lorenzo, chancing to see in his garden the mask of a grinning faun which the boy had sculptured, made him an inmate of the Medici Palace, where he was treated as one of the family, and, Vasari says, was given an allowance of five ducats a month and resided there for four years; which would mean until the Medici family were driven into exile in 1494.

And it was an important time for such encouragement to Art. For the Renaissance in Art was now approaching the full blaze of its zenith. Every one of the great masters, except Tintoretto, was living in the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent. And although of these Luini, Fra Bartolommeo, Michelangelo, Giorgione, Titian, Palma Vecchio, Sodoma, Andrea del Sarto, and Raphael were as yet children, the following were all at work, viz.: Verrocchio, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, Filippino Lippi, and Lorenzo di Credi; besides the Bellini and Carpaccio at Venice,[2] Mantegna at Mantua, Francia at Bologna, and Pinturicchio at Perugia.

Verrocchio.

Verrocchio, "the true eye," whose real name was Andrea di Cione, was the chief pupil of Donatello. He executed many

[1] *I.e.*, in 1490.

[2] Painting in oils on canvas was introduced at Venice about the year 1478, and all artists soon began to follow the Bellini brothers in using this method.

works for Lorenzo the Magnificent, but whether owing to the subsequent commotions when the Medici were driven out and their palace plundered, or other cause, very few of his works remain. Among these are, his tomb of Giovanni and Piero de' Medici in San Lorenzo; his bronze statue of *David*, now in the Bargello Museum; the group of *Christ and St Thomas* outside Or San Michele, which has been said to be the most beautiful head of Christ ever executed; and his fountain of *The boy with a dolphin*, made for Lorenzo's villa of Careggi, and now in the courtyard of the Palazzo Vecchio. One writer calls this statue "the little boy who for ever flits across the court, while the dolphin struggles in his arms, whose pressure sends the water spurting from its nostrils." And Perkins says:—"Like a sunbeam which has found its way into these gloomy precincts, it brightens them by its presence." Verrocchio's last work was the splendid equestrian statue in bronze of Colleoni at Venice, the second equestrian statue executed since the times of ancient Rome,[1] and superior to that of Gattamelata by Donatello at Padua. Verrocchio only lived to complete the model in clay (of both horse and man) and the casting was completed by Leopardi. Still less of Verrocchio's work as a painter remains. Besides the *Baptism of Christ*, now in the Accademia at Florence, only one other of his pictures is in existence, that of the *Madonna adoring the infant Christ*, now in the Ruskin museum at Sheffield. But Verrocchio's chief fame as a painter is that he was the master of Lorenzo di

[1] *See* chap. iv. p. 114.

Credi and Leonardo da Vinci. Verrocchio died in 1488.

Botticelli (2).

When to the graver atmosphere of the time of Piero il Gottoso there succeeded all that season of youthful joy and light-heartedness which marked the first nine years of the rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent, this change in the spirit of the time caused a corresponding change in Botticelli's painting; so that we find him painting in this his second period[1] all those pictures which are so permeated with the spirit of that time. To these have to be added, in the latter half of this period of his painting, his fresco pictures at Rome.

(II.)

The chief pictures of Botticelli's second period are the *Birth of Venus*, *Mars and Venus*, the *Return of Spring*, and *Pallas subduing the Centaur*, pictures in which contemporary events are memorialised under the symbolism of classic myths clothed in a fifteenth-century dress. We have already seen[2] how the first three of these refer to the tournament of 1475, to the brighter era which Lorenzo had inaugurated, and to his work in the domain of literature; and how the fourth refers to the deliverance of Florence by Lorenzo from the war and peril following on the Pazzi Conspiracy.

Soon after the war was ended Botticelli was summoned (in 1481) by Pope Sixtus to Rome to assist, with Perugino and Ghirlandajo, in painting the celebrated series of frescoes covering the walls

[1] For Botticelli's first period, *see* chap. vi. pp.171-182.
[2] Chap. viii. pp. 224-228.

of the newly-erected Sixtine chapel. His portions of this work consist of the frescoes representing the early life of Moses, the destruction of Korah, the purification of the leper, the temptation of Christ, and the portraits of the seven martyred bishops of Rome. These important frescoes gained Botticelli added renown, and he returned to Florence with a great reputation. For the next few years he was, in consequence, in great request among the owners of important villas near Florence, all desiring to have frescoes painted by him in their villas. Amongst others he painted at this time for Lorenzo Tornabuoni an important series of frescoes in the villa of the Tornabuoni family (now Villa Lemmi) at Rifredi, representing events in the history of that family.[1] Also (apparently) a series of frescoes in the villa of Castello, painted for Giovanni di Pier Francesco, of the younger branch of the Medici family.[2] Then came the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent and the expulsion shortly afterwards of the Medici, and Botticelli found himself in a Florence the whole atmosphere of which was completely changed under the influence of Savonarola. So again Botticelli's style changes, and we have the pictures of his third period, which will best be considered in connection with the events which caused this entire change in the life of Florence.[3]

[1] Until recently these were supposed to have all perished, but a few years ago the present owner of the villa (Signor Lemmi) discovered under the whitewash several of these frescoes, painted in reference to the marriage of Lorenzo Tornabuoni and Giovanna degli Albizzi in 1486. These fine frescoes are now in the Louvre.

[2] These are apparently the pictures referred to by the "Anonimo Gaddiano" (*see* Appendix VII.).

[3] For Botticelli's third and fourth periods, *see* chap. xi. pp. 351-359.

Ghirlandajo.

As in Cosimo's day, so also was it in that of Lorenzo. There could scarcely be a greater contrast than exists between the two chief painters of his time, Botticelli and Ghirlandajo; the former so full of that spirit of speaking to the mind through the eye that every one of his pictures is replete with deep and original thoughts; the latter absolutely without a vestige of this power. Ghirlandajo, though his drawing and colouring are perfect, is constantly called "commonplace" and "prosaic," while it has even been said of him, notwithstanding all his powers of technique, that he is "without the art faculty"; and this feeling regarding his work is undoubtedly caused by this entire absence in him of imagination and originality of thought. Thus in his pictures we find our attention ever drawn to the accessories of the subject rather than to the subject itself; while of all such accessories he is a most careful and prosaically accurate delineator.

But each of the great masters has his own excellence; and Ghirlandajo's lies in this very direction. Ruskin, being noticeably without the historic faculty, could see no excellence in Ghirlandajo, and severely condemns his work on all occasions, calling it the mere handicraft of the mechanic. But those who are interested in what the men and women of this time in Florence looked like can forgive Ghirlandajo his want of the art faculty for the sake of the results on the historic side, results which, had he not given them to us, we should have looked for in vain elsewhere. Ghirlandajo's want of originality led him to be a most careful copyist in every direction to which he

turned his powers. And as he introduced into his pictures on religious subjects representations of the persons of note around him (carried out with a careful accuracy which rendered him quite incapable of flattering them[1]), together with many details of everyday life in Florence, we obtain from him a valuable record of the appearance and manner of life of the men and women of the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent. In this way Ghirlandajo gives us in his frescoes in the choir of Santa Maria Novella portraits of Politian, Marsilio Ficino, Cristoforo Landino, and Demetrius Chalcondylas;[2] of the painters Baldovinetti, Mainardi, Ghirlandajo himself, and his brother; of the bankers Sassetti and Ridolfi; of the members of the Tornabuoni family; of the reigning Florentine beauty of the day, Giovanna degli Albizzi, who in 1486 married Lorenzo Tornabuoni; of the well-known dealer in arms and armour, Niccolò Caparra; and others. Again in his frescoes in the church of Santa Trinità we have protraits of Maso degli Albizzi, Palla Strozzi, Agnolo Acciajuoli, and of Lorenzo himself. And in the church of Ognissanti, in his fresco of the Vespucci family he has given us a portrait (painted about 1474) of Amerigo Vespucci, who gave his name to America. Ghirlandajo's best picture is the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, painted for the Sassetti chapel in Santa Trinità, and now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti.[3] Ghirlandajo died in 1494, and is buried in Santa Maria Novella.

[1] As Mrs Ady says:—"The natural bent of his mind led him to paint every vein and wrinkle in the faces of his personages, and every brooch and jewel in their robes, with the same minute realism."

[2] So said by Vasari; now said to be Gentile de' Becchi, Bishop of Arezzo.

[3] One of the shepherds is a portrait of himself.

Medici villas.

In Lorenzo's time the four principal villas possessed by the Medici were the villa of Careggi, the Medici Villa at Fiesole, the villa of Cafaggiolo[1] in the valley of the Mugello, originally built by Cosimo and largely added to by Lorenzo, and the villa at Poggio a Caiano, about twelve miles to the north-west of Florence, built by Lorenzo.

Lorenzo the Magnificent. 1492.

Lorenzo only lived for two months after effecting the reconciliation between the King of Naples and the Pope. He had for years suffered (like his father and grandfather) from gout, and all through the year 1491 his health was rapidly failing. In consequence he had begun to entrust part of the public affairs to his eldest son, Pietro. In giving the latter advice regarding his future conduct as head of the State, Lorenzo specially warned him never to forget that his position was simply that of a citizen of Florence, telling him that his own success had been mainly due to his uniform care on this point.

In February 1492 Lorenzo's attacks became so severe that he was unable to attend to any business. Early in March the three years expired during which his son Giovanni's appointment as a cardinal was to be kept secret, and it was publicly announced. He was formally invested with his new rank in the Badia of Fiesole, and a grand banquet was given at the Medici Palace in honour

[1] Cafaggiolo, like so many of these great country villas of the time, was practically a castle. The moat and drawbridge can be seen in the picture of it (vol. ii. p. 338).

of the occasion; but Lorenzo was only able to be carried in on a litter to see the brilliant company assembled to do honour to his son. Giovanni, now sixteen, had forthwith to leave for Rome to take his seat in the Sacred College; and on the 12th March he left Florence for the Papal city. Nine days later Lorenzo had himself carried to Careggi and prepared for his end, gathering around him several of his closest friends, and making them read to him portions of his favourite authors. From his death-bed he wrote to Giovanni a long letter of advice and farewell.[1]

This letter to his young son [2] is a very remarkable one. Striking as it is for its evidence of calm equanimity and mental vigour unimpaired even by severe illness and approaching death, it is yet more so for the light it throws on Lorenzo's character. For to a large extent it contradicts forcibly the view of him which a long succession of writers resolutely biassed against him have made the prevailing one. Not remarkable, perhaps, had it emanated from some other source, it is so to us solely because of the false impression of the man which has been given us.

Lorenzo died on the 9th April 1492, at the age of forty-three, at his villa of Careggi,[3] that much-loved home of his leisure hours, where Plato and Homer, Virgil and Horace had been worshipped,

[1] Being the last words from Lorenzo's pen, it has been called his "Swan Song."

[2] *See* Appendix VIII.; letter from Lorenzo to his son Giovanni. In translating it I have followed the original as closely as possible in order to show the noticeably simple character of the language and expressions used. It will be seen that the letter itself differs wholly from the abstract of it which Trollope puts forward as purporting to convey its sense.

[3] Plate XXV.

and the Muses revered. His two closest friends, Politian and Pico della Mirandola, were with him to the last. As his end approached he sent for a priest, who administered to him the last sacrament; he got out of bed to receive it kneeling, but was too weak and had to lie down again. He had already sent to ask Savonarola to come to him; and it says much for Lorenzo that he should have desired an interview with the uncompromising friar. After it was over a crucifix was held before Lorenzo; he raised himself up to kiss it, fell back, and died.[1]

There are two very different accounts of what took place at the interview with Savonarola. On the one hand we have the account (written at the time) by Politian, who was present,[2] and who simply states that Savonarola exhorted Lorenzo to hold fast to the Faith, to resolve to amend his life if spared, and to meet death, if it was to be so, with fortitude; that he then prayed with him and gave him his blessing. The other account (which appeared long afterwards) is the well-known story that Lorenzo confessed to Savonarola three sins which lay heavy on his conscience—the sack of Volterra, the bloodshed after the Pazzi Conspiracy, and the misappropriation to his own use of some of

[1] Some of the medical remedies given him were better calculated to hasten his end than to effect his recovery. Ludovico Sforza had sent him a very famous Lombard doctor, Lazaro of Pavia; but the chief remedy which he prescribed was a mixture of pulverised diamonds and pearls. Whether owing to jealousy of the Lombard physician, sorrow at Lorenzo's death, or the result of foul play, the body of his most eminent Florentine physician, Pier Leoni, was on the morning after Lorenzo's death found at the bottom of a well in the garden of the villa.

[2] Politian's account is corroborated to some extent by a letter written by Benedetto Dei only a week after Lorenzo's death (*see* Armstrong's *Lorenzo de' Medici*, p. 310).

THE VILLA OF CAREGGI.

Brogi]

the Dower Fund;[1] that Savonarola required from him a promise to restore the money thus misappropriated, to which it is said Lorenzo assented; that Savonarola then required that he should restore the liberties of Florence, to which Lorenzo made no reply, and that thereupon Savonarola left him unabsolved.

This picturesque story bears on its face evidence of its falsity. It did not appear until fifty years after Lorenzo and Savonarola were both dead, and admittedly rests on hearsay evidence, whereas Politian wrote as an eye-witness and within a few weeks of the event. Supposing the story true, then it must have been related either by Lorenzo or by Savonarola, for it expressly states that none other was present when Lorenzo made his confession. Burlamacchi, who put it forward, declared that he had the story from Savonarola's own lips. "But," says Bishop Creighton, "we may be pardoned for sparing Savonarola's fame the supposition that he made political capital for his own glorification out of the secrets of the confessional; still less probable is it that the tale was revealed by Lorenzo in an agony of remorse after Savonarola's departure and just before his death."[2]

[1] This was a Government Insurance Fund, in which by regular subscriptions parents could provide marriage portions for their daughters. In 1485 the Signoria, being much pressed to repay the expenses of the late war, decided, instead of increasing taxation, that only one-fifth of the sum insured for in this fund should be paid to the girl on her marriage, and that the remainder should be retained by the State as a Government debt, bearing interest at seven per cent. This was a most unpopular measure, but not on account of the arrangement itself, for it obviously assisted economy, while it was preferred to increased taxation, but because it was considered that the interest of seven per cent. was too low. In any case it can scarcely be called a misappropriation, even by the State. Still less was it a misappropriation of State funds to his own use by Lorenzo or a ground for the statement made by one modern writer that "He had seized on the dowries of Florentine maidens to pay for his own pleasures."

[2] Creighton iv. 341.

Moreover, a still more conclusive fact has failed to be observed, namely, that (no matter what may or may not be the truth about them) the three things represented as weighing on Lorenzo's conscience could not have done so *from Lorenzo's point of view.* For the sack of Volterra he was so remotely responsible, and had made such efforts to ameliorate the sufferings caused, that he could not have felt the matter weighing on his conscience; for the slaughter in connection with the Pazzi Conspiracy he was not only not responsible, but had remonstrated with the infuriated people against it, and had saved some of those implicated in the crime; while as regards the Dower Fund the charge would, for the reasons already stated, have appeared to him merely absurd. And still more so since Lorenzo's just dealing in all money matters is very noticeable; not only just, but liberal, dealing in money matters was a marked feature of his character.[1] The so-called misappropriation has been explained above, but in this connection it may be remarked that when four years afterwards Savonarola was himself the ruling power in Florence, exactly the same use (or misappropriation) of the money of this Dower Fund was continued; which completely stultifies any such charge as specially applicable to Lorenzo. Lastly, the final request attributed to Savonarola would have meant the return to a state of things which to Lorenzo represented everything most harmful to Florence's welfare; while

[1] Any examination of Lorenzo's personal money transactions will show that he always erred on the side of over-payment, and that anything in the nature of an endeavour to get the best of a bargain was abhorrent to him.

it is inconceivable that Savonarola should have required from the dying man that which he was in any case at that moment powerless to perform.

This story has probably played a greater part in creating the mental picture generally formed of Lorenzo the Magnificent than any of the authenticated facts of his life. The artifice of pretending that certain things weighed on his conscience is a much more effective way of instilling in us a belief that he had been guilty of those things than a plain statement to that effect would have been. The story has had a great vogue, both on account of its sensational character, and of the opportunity it furnishes for calumniating the Medici, but since the careful analysis of it made by Bishop Creighton[1] its complete mendacity has been fully established. Roscoe's remark is justified:—

"A story that exhibits evident symptoms of that party spirit which did not arise in Florence until after the death of Lorenzo, and which is entirely contradictory to the account left by Politian, written before the motives for misrepresentation existed, is rendered deserving of notice only by the necessity of its refutation."

Lorenzo the Magnificent and Clarice Orsini had seven children:—

Pietro, who succeeded his father.
Giovanni, afterwards Pope Leo X.
Giuliano, afterwards Duc de Nemours.
Maddalena, who married Francesco Cibò.
Lucrezia, who married Jacopo Salviati.
Maria, who died unmarried in 1487.
Contessina, who married Piero Ridolfi.

[1] Creighton's *History of the Papacy*, iv. 340-343.

Lucrezia's husband was a great-grandson of the Jacopo Salviati who was Cosimo's friend, and was a cousin of the Archbishop Salviati hung in the Pazzi Conspiracy. Lorenzo made the match to re-establish cordial relations between his family and their old friends, the Salviati.

In appearance Lorenzo the Magnificent was unprepossessing. At the same time the portrait of him by Vasari,[1] painted more than fifty years after Lorenzo's death by a man who never saw him, would seem not to give a true likeness of him. It neither accords with the descriptions of his appearance given by contemporary writers, nor with the portraits of him on medallions by contemporary medallists, and would almost seem intended to degrade his memory by giving him as sinister an appearance as possible and surrounding him with the attributes of a buffoon.[2] Niccolò Valori, speaking of Lorenzo's appearance, says:—

"He was above the common stature, broad-shouldered, and solidly built, and second to none in athletic exercises. . . . His complexion was dark, and although his face was not handsome, it was so full of dignity as to compel respect."

It is well known that medallions of this period are as a rule much more reliable than painted portraits; and the two which exist of Lorenzo (Plates XVII. and XXIII.) by the celebrated contemporary medallists, Bertoldo and Pollajuolo,[3]

[1] Now in the Uffizi Gallery.

[2] Whether this is intentional it is impossible to say, but it may have been so. The younger branch of the family bore no good-will to the elder branch, and in particular to Lorenzo and his son Pietro (*see* chap. x.), and Vasari, as the court painter of Cosimo I. (of the younger branch), had every inducement to represent Lorenzo in no flattering manner.

[3] Bertoldo was a pupil of Donatello, and died the year before Lorenzo. The still more celebrated Pollajuolo died in 1498.

show a plain but very powerful face, with something of the look of his father, Piero il Gottoso. The portraits on these medallions also receive strong corroboration from the terra-cotta cast of Lorenzo's face taken after death, and now the property of the Società della Columbaria.[1] So that we may conclude that these portraits, and not Vasari's picture, give us the true representation of Lorenzo. Speaking of the concentrated power of his face, Miss Cruttwell says:—

"In the best portraits that exist of him—that of the Pazzi medal and the superb death-mask of the Confraternity of the Columbaria — the face, with its compressed lips, stern brow, and powerful jaw, might serve as the embodiment of physical and intellectual force."[2]

If, however, Lorenzo's outward appearance assisted him little, his manner more than restored the balance. It is said to have been so extraordinarily fascinating that it caused his plain face and harsh voice to be entirely forgotten. This statement of contemporary writers is fully borne out by various episodes in Lorenzo's life, which make it evident that he had an unfailing power of charming all, both high and low, who were brought in contact with him.

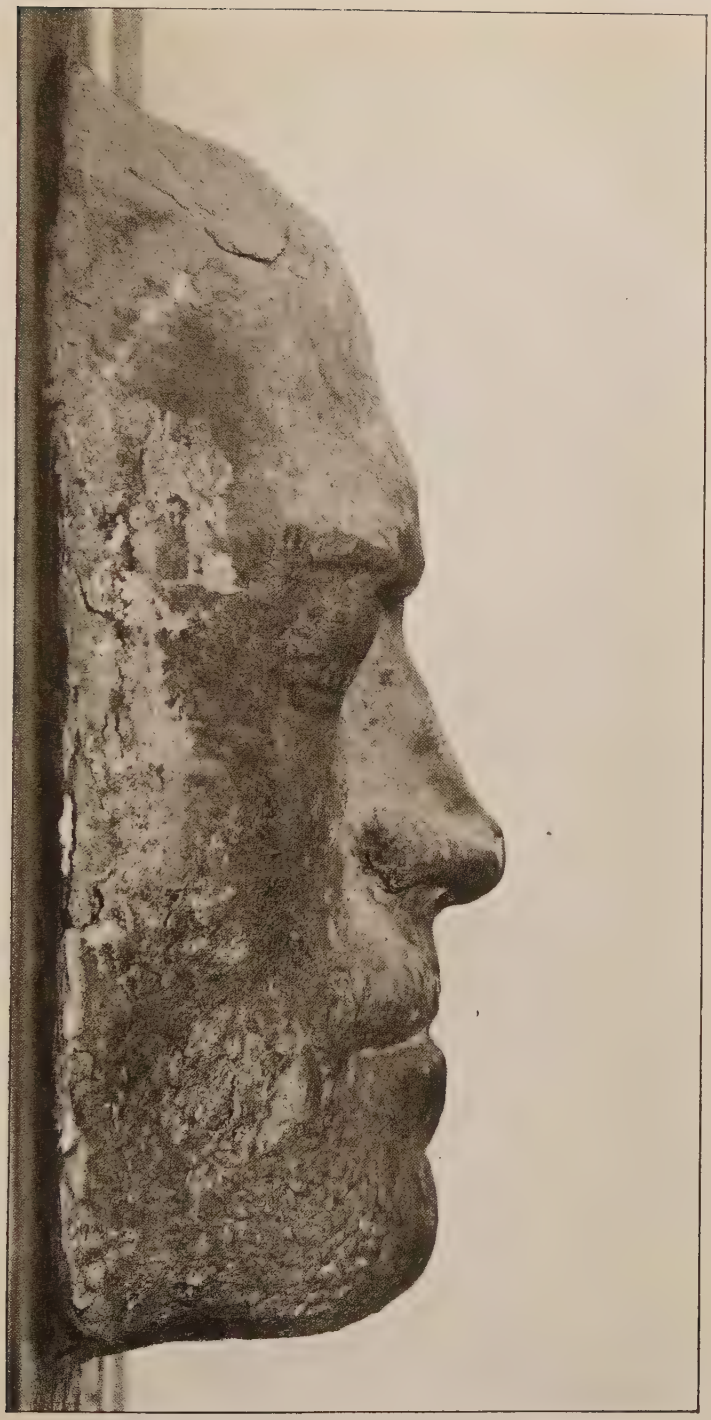
Speaking of Lorenzo in his social capacity, Mr Armstrong[3] says:—

"Of his qualities as a host and companion there can be no question. . . . He was the soul of courtesy and kindliness, always ready to aid talent, to oblige a friend, to grant a petition, to

1 Plate XXVI.
2 *Verrocchio*, by Miss M. Cruttwell.
3 *Lorenzo de' Medici*, by E. Armstrong, M.A.

perpetrate a job, to be button-holed in the public street. The simplicity and friendliness of his letters to his ambassadors fully account for the devotion with which they served him. For scholars and artists he kept open house; whoever came first, whatever his age or rank, took his seat at the host's side. His conversation, as his character, had the fascination of variety. At times his tongue had a rough edge. To a cousin who boasted of the copious supply of water at his villa, he says: 'Then you might well afford to keep cleaner hands'; to a Sienese who condoled with him on his indifferent eyesight and added that the air of Florence was bad for the sight, Lorenzo retorts: 'And that of Siena for the brain.' To one who adversely criticised the character of the musician Squarcialupo, Lorenzo said: 'If you knew how hard it is to obtain perfection in any art, you would overlook shortcomings.'"

His achievements have already been detailed. But that a man who died at the age of forty-three should have been able to do all that he did, in raising Florence so high in political power and commercial prosperity, in maintaining the peace of Italy and converting chronic enmity with surrounding states into friendship, in making the Tuscan language the general language of Italy by his works as an author, in carrying forward to so great an extent the resuscitation of Learning, and in helping so largely the advancement of Art, is extraordinary. It did in very truth require that "enduring indomitable strength" which he symbolised by his crest of the three diamond rings to achieve such results in so comparatively short a life.



CAST TAKEN FROM THE FACE OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT AFTER DEATH.
(*Reproduced by permission of the Società della Columbaria.*)

Burton]

Lorenzo the Magnificent has been acknowledged by the united voice of Europe to have been one of the most remarkable men who ever held the rule of a state; and his character has always interested mankind, though perhaps it is only in these days that his greatness in a larger sphere has come to be fully appreciated. He was a leader in an age which abounded with great men. And he has been recognised as being one of the chief inspiring forces of the fifteenth century. He is the most important man of all those whose story we are following, and it is therefore worth while to examine that much-debated character in more detail than can be devoted to others.

The violently contradictory opinions common in regard to the Medici culminate in the case of Lorenzo the Magnificent. With writers belonging to the one camp he has every virtue, with those belonging to the other every vice; with the former all his actions are attributed to the noblest motives, with the latter even the most ordinary actions are, in order to show base motives, distorted until they result in statements which are glaringly incompatible.

Apart, however, from this point, another difficulty lies in the versatility of his character, a quality of many-sidedness which he shared with many of his family, but which was specially prominent in him. Speaking of this characteristic in Lorenzo, and the difficulty which it creates, Mr Armstrong says as follows:[1]—

"It is the prize, or the penalty, of a versatile receptive nature to be regarded as a mystery. The slower mind cannot follow with sufficient

[1] *Lorenzo de' Medici*, by E. Armstrong, M.A.

speed the workings of so sensitive an instrument, though the eye marks the multiplicity of results. The reality is that the action and reaction of circumstances and character are peculiarly rapid, but the observer believes that the outward manifestations are artificial and dramatic, having little relation to the inner life. This forms a real difficulty in the appreciation of the south European character by Anglo-Saxons, who are seldom genuinely versatile. They have an inborn, deep-seated distrust for such natures; the few English public men, for instance, who have been so gifted have been regarded, at the best, as problems, but more often as impostors, or as characters abnormally weak and changeable.

"Thus it is that Lorenzo the Magnificent has been so often called a mystery. . . . Really, however, there has seldom been a nature less mysterious. He was completely natural, singularly open to the influence of circumstances. As his intellect was versatile, so his character was receptive. He possessed in abundance that quality of 'give and take,' that power of impressing others and of receiving their impression, that gift of *simpatia* which to the Italian expresses so much more than its English representative. . . . Lorenzo was equally natural and unaffected whether he were planning a comic novelty for the Carnival, or critically examining the last new manuscript that his agents had brought or forwarded from Greece or elsewhere. At table he would give grave advice to young Michelangelo, throw a rhyme or epigram across the board to Pulci, or discuss the problem of unity in plurality with Marsilio Ficino. He would give audience to an ambassador, or a horse trainer, or a popular preacher; hold a party *caucus* in the Via Larga, attend a critical meeting of the Government, and then ride off to Careggi

or Caiano to play with his children, and rise with the lark to ride to hounds, or fly his favourite falcons. Lorenzo's versatility is the frequent theme even of his contemporary countrymen. . . . A lover of the country rather than of the town, whenever he could he would escape to Poggio a Caiano or more distant villas. He was fond of the country people, their manners, their songs, and their pleasures. . . . His family life was extremely simple; he romped with his children, joined in their music, wrote a religious play for them to act. . . . In Lorenzo's career it is impossible to draw a hard and fast line between diplomacy and politics, art and literature, religion and philosophy, domesticity and public life, country sports and city functions. It is difficult to analyse so manifold a character."

Among the charges which a later age found to make against Lorenzo, that of profligacy and of corrupting the Florentines gives most evidence of the virulent partisan spirit which has been mentioned, owing to the entire want of ground for the accusation. So far as his private character is concerned no facts have been brought forward to support the charge. Judged by the standard of his day he was not an immoral man. His conduct in this respect was superior to that of contemporary sovereigns, our own in England not excepted. It is also noticeable that no illegitimate children are ascribed to him: almost a unique instance in that age. But it is in his public capacity that the charge is chiefly made, alleging that he debased the popular taste by the introduction of licentiousness into Art and Literature: an accusation utterly without foundation, and levelled against one most of whose poetry was

of an elevating character. In support of this charge his Carnival songs are often cited; but here again the standard of the age must determine the point. And judged by that standard the verdict will be conclusive. Nothing can be said against Lorenzo's poetry in this respect which cannot be said with much greater force against, for instance, Shakespeare. Roscoe remarks :—

"In the poem of Brandolini, the attention of Lorenzo to the dictates of morality is the particular subject of praise, and that by a contemporary writer. Had the conduct of Lorenzo been notoriously licentious, *such praise would have been the severest satire.*"[1]

The accusation that the profligacy of the time among the Florentines is to be laid on Lorenzo's shoulders receives strong contradiction from the contemporary records of Milan, Venice, Ferrara, Mantua, and many other capital cities of Italy, since we there find at this period exactly the same state of things, and the same tendency to sensuous amusements and licentiousness replacing a severer style of life. It was a general result of the bursting forth of the Renaissance, and had no special manifestation in Florence; in fact, rather the reverse. Lorenzo, as regarded his own private life, was better than his time; while the idea that a ruler should endeavour to elevate his people was one which did not dawn on Europe till many generations later, and it is not likely that it ever crossed his mind. By other writers, again, this corruption of the Florentines is declared to consist in a deterioration from their former strength of character, and the charge which these

[1] *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*, by William Roscoe.

writers make against Lorenzo is that of having exercised "an enfeebling influence." But we do not find this supposed enfeeblement borne out by the history of the time, or find the Florentines at the end of Lorenzo's rule any feebler in character than at its commencement. The Florence which in 1494 did not quail before the threats of a Charles VIII. showed itself no less strong than that which in 1478 braved the wrath of a Sixtus IV. It was another kind of enfeeblement of which, after the exile of the Medici, the Florentines had to complain—that due to their own faction-fighting, and not to any action on the part of Lorenzo.

Another charge which shows no less animus is that which asserts that Lorenzo enriched himself at the expense of the public funds. Various circumstances afforded opportunity for this charge. Not only was Lorenzo expected to provide royal hospitality in the Medici Palace to distinguished visitors to Florence (expenditure which was seldom refunded to him by the State), but also he frequently had to advance from the Medici bank the war expenses of the State, and this was sometimes refunded to him and sometimes not. He had also in the conduct of foreign affairs constantly to disburse large sums as secret subsidies to foreign states; these sums were either advanced or reimbursed to him by the State, but the secret nature of their expenditure naturally left it open to any one to suggest that he spent the money on himself. Those to whom every act of the Medici has an evil aspect have not failed to take advantage of such an opportunity, while it seems forgotten that "*secret service money*" is a regular item of expenditure of every modern government,

and is (necessarily) never accounted for by the high official to whom its expenditure is entrusted. Hence we find these transactions called "peculation" and "embezzlement" on Lorenzo's part. Such a charge, made against one who had spent his private funds on the public behalf to so large an extent that even the immense fortune left him by his father was severely reduced thereby, gives us a measure of the length to which the partisan spirit against the Medici can go.

At a meeting held three days after Lorenzo's funeral the Signoria officially placed it on record that "he always subordinated his own interest to the advantage and benefit of the community; shrank neither from trouble nor danger for the good of the state and its freedom; and devoted to that object all his thoughts and powers, securing public order by excellent laws."[1] Are we then, on the one hand, to hold this as the correct view of Lorenzo's character and conduct, and that Hallam, Burckhardt, and Gregorovius are right? Or, on the other hand, was Lorenzo "a usurper who aimed only at his own interest," and embezzled the public money; one in whom the enslavement of Florence "was the hard work of his manhood"; and one who for this end "deliberately led the Florentines into profligacy," as alleged by Sismondi, Perrens, Symonds, Villari, and Trollope?[2] Examining the conflicting evidence, and more particularly the facts of Lorenzo's life admitted by all, it would appear that the charge of being a "usurper" cannot be main-

[1] This resolution was voted for by 483 out of 546 senators.

[2] Sismondi vii. 290; Perrens' *History of Florence*, i. 431; Symonds ii. 315, 318, iii. 264, iv. 369, 386; Symonds' *Sketches and Studies in Italy* (1879), 144, 145; Villari's *Savonarola*, i. 36, 39, 45; Trollope iii. 469.

tained, especially in the face of the high authority of Hallam;[1] that the charge of having "enslaved" or made himself a "tyrant" over Florence is utterly irreconcilable with the fact that he had no military force and that his power rested solely on the will of the people; that the charge of "embezzlement" is, for the reasons already given,[2] one which only prejudice can assert; and that the charge of profligacy and of debasing the public taste by introducing licentiousness into Art and Letters is without an atom of foundation.[3]

But, after all, the best evidence as to which side in this controversy is right is furnished by the people of Florence themselves, those who lived under Lorenzo's rule, and who if his actions were such as his detractors have asserted, had to bear the results of them. Did the Florentines as a whole during his lifetime regard Lorenzo with pride and approbation, and sorrow for his death as a national loss; or did they look upon that death as a joyful release to them from the tyranny of a usurper who embezzled the moneys of the State and enriched himself at their expense? It is incontestable that the former, and not the latter, was the view they held; and the evidence which such a fact supplies is absolutely conclusive upon the whole matter.[4]

Lorenzo's funeral was, in accordance with his own instructions, an unostentatious one. He was buried, like his great-grandfather and father, in the Old Sacristy in San Lorenzo, in the same tomb with his brother Giuliano. From thence, however, his and Giuliano's remains were, sixty-seven years

[1] Hallam's *Europe during the Middle Ages*, i. 542

[2] *See* pp. 293-294, and 303.

[3] *See* pp. 301-302.

[4] There is an able defence of Lorenzo's character by Ernesto Masi in *La Vita Italiana nel Rinascimento*, pp. 1-30.

afterwards, removed to the New Sacristy, which had by that time been added to the church. Lorenzo and Giuliano lie buried under the end wall of this sacristy, that opposite to the altar.[1]

It is, however, strange to record that no monument marks the grave of the great Lorenzo the Magnificent; while we see that the absence of such a monument actually in course of time caused a doubt as to where he was buried. Michelangelo was to have executed a monument for his tomb, but left Florence without doing so; and so matters have remained ever since. Probably this is chiefly because none have since liked to propose the erection of a monument which by its situation would challenge comparison with the only two other tombs in the chapel, the masterpieces of Michelangelo. No doubt the difficulty is a considerable one; at the same time it seems, from a national point of view, a great pity that it should work such a result. If one may venture to suggest, possibly the difficulty might be met by placing on the wall over the tomb a large black marble slab, perfectly plain, with simply the name *Lorenzo il Magnifico* on it, and year of birth and death, without any other words; it would rely for impressiveness solely on its size, massiveness, and absolute plainness.[2] Such a monument would avoid all clashing with Michelangelo's masterpieces, while it would be in accord with Lorenzo's own sentiments (shown in the instructions as to his funeral), as well as

[1] It was in recent times long disputed exactly where in the New Sacristy Lorenzo and Giuliano lay buried; but this question was set at rest in October 1895, when, by order of the Government, the end wall of this sacristy was opened and their bodies found buried there in coffins which, though much broken, had their names on them. Their remains were put into new coffins and re-interred in the same spot.

[2] A single line at the foot might record that Giuliano was also buried there.

with the spirit of those earlier generations of the Medici to which these two brothers belonged.

Mr Armstrong's words on the absence of any monument in Florence to Lorenzo the Magnificent are as follows:—

"Florence has not repaid the generous recognition to Lorenzo which he himself gave to others.[1] With or without her wish the fame of the Medici will for ever be linked with hers. In Lorenzo's own words, '*The house goes with the State.*' After four hundred years she might well lay the ghost, if such there be, of political antipathy, to honour with a fitting monument the most national, the most gifted, representative of that many-sided culture for which the city of the Arno is still famous."

Contemporary historical events. 1492.

Several very important events in the history of Europe took place in the same year as the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Spain. — The consolidation of Spain, begun in 1469 by the marriage of Ferdinand, King of Arragon, with Isabella, Queen of Castile, was in 1492 completed. Ferdinand and Isabella (joint sovereigns), after having between the years 1474 and 1481 created peace and order in their previously troubled dominion, resumed in the latter year the war against the Moors. Their arms met with a wonderful succession of victories, and at length, in 1492, after eleven years of war, Granada, which had been the Moorish capital for two hundred and fifty years, was taken, the Mahomedan power in Spain was ended, and they were driven out after eight hundred years' occupation. In the same year there also took place the discovery of America

[1] It was Lorenzo who placed on the walls of the cathedral the marble slab to the memory of Giotto, and who wrote the words thereon.

by Columbus, under the auspices of Ferdinand and Isabella, which added still further to the glory of their reign, and to the power of Spain. The year 1492 was truly a great one for Spain.

Rome.—In the same year, two months after the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent, Pope Innocent VIII. also died. He was succeeded by the notorious Spaniard, Roderigo Borgia (Alexander VI.). This caused Giovanni de' Medici to return to Florence, he being one of the cardinals who had voted against Roderigo Borgia's election, and all these having to fly from Rome.

France.—In this year Charles VIII., having attained the age of twenty-two, took over the government of the kingdom from his capable sister, and began to form projects which were ere long to issue in an invasion of Italy destined to usher in a new era in international politics.

Lorenzo's private crest; interlaced diamond rings, with motto "Semper."

CHAPTER X

PIETRO, THE UNFORTUNATE

Born 1471. (*Ruled* 1492-1494.) *Died* 1503.

On Lorenzo's death Pietro,[1] the eldest of his three sons, succeeded to the headship of the family and the rule of Florence. He himself was twenty-one, his brother Giovanni (who returned from Rome two months after Pietro's rule began) was sixteen, and his brother Giuliano a boy of thirteen. Pietro was strong, handsome, and excelled in all athletic pursuits, but he gained almost in boyhood the name by which he is always known. "It seemed merely to require that he should be a party to any project for it invariably to fail of success." This peculiarity his qualities of character did not tend to neutralise. He had a heedless temperament, and was more inclined to occupy himself in sport and amusement than in attending to affairs of State; while he was cursed with a haughtiness of disposition which he took no pains to conceal, and which ill accorded with the sentiments of republican Florence. Pietro was not a fool, as often stated.[2] He was simply an ordinary young noble of his day,

[1] Plate XXVII.

[2] Several poems written by him are still preserved in the Medici Library in San Lorenzo.

without more brains than other people possessed. But the Medici had always had more brains than other people possessed; it was expected of them; and they were not wanted by the Florentines as rulers if they ceased to be thus gifted.

His wife, Alfonsina Orsini, was just of the character calculated to double the difficulties created by his own faults. She had a full share of the Orsini pride, and by her unconcealed contempt for the Florentines had, even before Lorenzo's death, made herself intensely disliked by them. Seeing how essentially the Medici rule depended upon popularity, Pietro was evidently as unfortunate in the character of the wife who had been given him as in other matters.

We now come to an important turning-point in the history of the Medici. Whereas each generation of this family had had to encounter a formidable attempt to crush them—storms which they had weathered—there was now to come upon them one destined to involve them in many vicissitudes.

Within a year of his succeeding to the rule of Florence, Pietro, chiefly from his disregard of republican forms and of that attitude of equality with every citizen of Florence which his father had so scrupulously observed, began to be very unpopular. Moreover, this unpopularity was increased by his cousins of the younger branch, Lorenzo and Giovanni, the two sons of Pier Francesco.[1] The first two generations of the younger branch had evinced no jealousy against the elder branch on account of their more exalted

[1] *See* Genealogical Table (Appendix I.).

PIETRO THE UNFORTUNATE, ELDEST SON OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.
By Botticelli.

Alinari] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

position. But in the third generation we find Pier Francesco's two sons (their father having died in 1476) beginning, even in the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent, to grow jealous of the importance of the elder branch, and to show a marked coolness towards them; and this feeling Pietro contrived to excite still more strongly. Towards the end of the life of Lorenzo the Magnificent, Giovanni, who was four years older than his cousin Pietro, fell in love with a lady beloved also by the latter. This, naturally, did not tend to improve matters; nor did a lawsuit, instigated by Pietro, which was its consequence. Whatever the reasons, these two cousins of his now began a regular course of hostility towards him; they fanned his rising unpopularity, headed the party opposed to him, and declared themselves attached to the liberty of the people, which they said he was trying to destroy.

Contemporary historical events. 1493-1494.

It was unfortunate for Pietro that he succeeded to the rule of Florence just when a storm was about to burst upon Italy, with which it would have needed all his father's ability to cope. When death removed the influence of Lorenzo men foresaw that it would not be long before Italy was again plunged into war[1]; but they did not foresee that to wars between the Italian states were now to be added those due to contests between France, Spain, and Germany, of which Italy would form the battlefield.

[1] Pope Innocent VIII., on hearing of Lorenzo's death, exclaimed: "The peace of Italy is at an end!"

The event with which this state of things began was the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. of France in order to attack the kingdom of Naples. Very possibly had Lorenzo the Magnificent been still at the helm of Italian politics he would have found means to avert this particular invasion, but sooner or later similar results would have been certain to ensue. For the growing strength of other countries, occurring simultaneously with a decline in power of the Italian states, rendered foreign attacks certain eventually to come upon Italy; and we are now entering on the time when that change was beginning by which, instead of Venice, Milan, Florence, Naples, and Rome taking the lead in European politics, France, Spain, Germany, and England were to become the leading countries of Europe. The commencement of this new era in European politics is marked by the accession of the Emperor Maximilian I., who in 1493 was elected Emperor on the death, after an uneventful reign of fifty-three years, of his father, the Emperor Frederick III.

Milan.—In 1490 the young Duke, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, came of age. But he being feeble and indolent, his capable uncle, Ludovico Sforza ("Il Moro"), who since 1480 had governed the Duchy in his name,[1] refused to surrender the rule to him. Gian Galeazzo's young wife, Isabella of Arragon, appealed forcibly and continuously to her grandfather, Ferrante, King of Naples, against this usurpation; but up to 1493 the protests of the latter had produced no effect. Some writers have held that it was because Il Moro saw him-

[1] *See* chap. ix. p. 253.

self about to be attacked by Naples that he invited the French King into Italy; there was, however, no sign that either King Ferrante (who died in January 1494), or his son and successor Alfonso, was preparing any force to attack Milan. Other writers state that Il Moro, having resolved to compass his nephew's death and make himself Duke, invited the French invasion in order to stir up trouble which would prevent the other Italian states from interfering with him. Whichever was the reason, Il Moro now invited Charles VIII. to attack Naples, and promised him the support of Milan.

France.—Louis XI., while he had consolidated France, had by his method of doing so crushed to a large extent the spirit of the French nation. Charles VIII., proceeding to rule on different lines from his hated father, had begun to look out for some opportunity for military exploits, both to assist in reviving the spirit of the nation and to gratify his own youthful desire for adventure. When, therefore, Ludovico Sforza urged him to put forward the old Angevin claim to Naples, and to bring an army into Italy to attack that kingdom, Charles eagerly accepted the proposal. French imagination was fired by the idea of an invasion of Italy; all classes caught it up with enthusiasm; and preparations on a great scale were forthwith made for an expedition which to the French had all the attraction of novelty and romance.

This expedition of Charles VIII. has a special importance of another kind. For this was the first exercise of the new power created by *a standing army*, a power destined to produce great

political changes in Europe. Hitherto the armies of such countries as France and England had consisted of the feudal levies brought to the standard of the king by the barons, and the necessity of humouring the caprices and ever-recurring jealousies of the latter when such a force was gathered together greatly nullified its offensive power. These conditions tended to prevent wars being undertaken against other countries, since they made the invasion of another country, far from the homes of such levies, a most difficult operation. But the new weapon which had been forged by Louis XI., primarily as a means of crushing the barons and princes of France, had altered all this, and while making the king supreme over his barons, had also put in his hand a formidable weapon against other countries. Thus it is not surprising that we find historians stating that Charles VIII. (who had no ability of his own) was at this time the most powerful sovereign in Europe. The reason was because he alone was in possession of this new weapon, which his astute father had had the wit to forge, and which no other country as yet possessed.[1]

There was, however, one other point in which a standing army differed materially from a feudal army, viz., in the item of cost. Charles VIII.'s army, which included infantry, artillery, and cavalry, did not consist of more than about 20,000 men[2] (though this was a great effort for those

[1] For a description of the composition of this army, *see* chap. xi. pp. 336-337.

[2] Authorities differ much as to the strength of Charles's army; it is variously stated at 15,000, 20,000, 30,000, and 40,000 men. Various circumstances, however, seem to show that it could scarcely have much exceeded 20,000.

times), but so little had the increased cost of such an army been realised that before it had penetrated any distance into Italy Charles found his treasury exhausted, and had to borrow large sums from the merchants of Genoa at the ruinous rate of interest of 42 per cent.[1]

In August 1494 Charles VIII. started from Vienne to invade Italy. Crossing the Alps he entered Lombardy, and was entertained at Milan by Il Moro, and at Pavia by the Duke Gian Galeazzo; and there the latter's wife, the beautiful and unfortunate Isabella of Arragon, threw herself at the French King's feet to intercede for her house, which he was marching to attack; but she gained nothing. And a few days later, on reaching Piacenza, Charles received the news that the Duke was dead—poisoned, it was universally believed, by his unscrupulous uncle, Il Moro, who at once imprisoned Isabella and her four children, and, notwithstanding that the late Duke had left a son and heir, proclaimed himself Duke of Milan.

Pietro the Unfortunate. 1494.

Meanwhile the other states of Italy prepared as best they might to meet this invasion. Naples, against whom the attack was directed, awaited it in her own territory. Rome made no preparations for defence, the Pope hoping that Charles would not molest him. Venice declared herself neutral. Tuscany (having no particular reason to espouse the cause of Naples) would no doubt have liked to have done the same, but lying right in the course of the French King's

[1] Roscoe says that the rate of interest was even as much as cent. per cent.

march was obliged to defend her territory. And Tuscany was ill prepared. The many years of peace had worked their usual effect in a want of preparedness for war. And to Pietro's difficulties on this account were added others. His disloyal cousins, Lorenzo and Giovanni, seized upon this opportunity, and at a time when all private feuds should have been sunk, made their country's need the occasion for gratifying their private jealousy. They sent secret assurances to Charles VIII. that they would promote his views, and would assist him with money, of which, as has been seen, he was much in need. This action of theirs was discovered, and they were arrested by Pietro's orders. No one could have been surprised if they had been executed as traitors to their country, or at all events imprisoned. Pietro, however, followed the example which his grandfather, Piero il Gottoso, had set, and behaved very leniently towards them, simply confining them, Lorenzo to the villa of Cafaggiolo, and Giovanni to the villa of Castello. They repaid him by escaping thence, going to Charles VIII. (who was then at Vigevano), and assuring him that the Florentines would ally themselves with him against Naples if only he would help them to get rid of Pietro.

By this time Charles's army was entering the borders of Tuscany and laying siege to its frontier fortresses, which were defended by such mercenary troops as Pietro had been able to collect; but these troops being quite unfit to cope with such an army failed to arrest the French. The frontier fortress of Sarzana,[1] which Charles attacked at the end

[1] Not far from Spezia.

of October, was soon captured; and the French King continued his advance. Pietro had now only two courses open to him. He has been spoken of with contempt by all writers for his action in this crisis, but whether this view is correct seems open to question, as it would appear to have scarcely sufficiently considered the problem before Pietro. On the fall of Sarzana the only two alternatives possible to him were, either to be prepared to sustain a siege of Florence by the French army, or to endeavour by a partial surrender to induce the French King to pass peaceably through Tuscany, avoiding the capital. The first course meant, inevitably, in view of the complete disparity in military power between the organised army which Charles commanded, and Florence's mercenary levies,[1] the assault and sack of Florence by foreign troops.[2] Had the French King been attempting to conquer Tuscany the matter would have been different, and Florence

[1] The *condottieri* troops employed by Florence and other Italian states in the wars of that time were inferior in power to such a force as Charles commanded in two respects. First, and chiefly, because an army is not merely a collection of regiments, and because, therefore, of the immense difference in military power between a force which possesses all the organisation and coherence of an army as compared with a collection of troops (even though equal in training and discipline) which is without that organisation. And secondly, because the *condottieri* troops of Italy had not in 1494 the degree of discipline which would have made them equal, in that particular at all events, to those of an organised army. Thirty years later Giovanni delle Bande Nere, the greatest *condottieri* leader of his age, introduced a great change in this respect; and his troops were highly disciplined. The altogether superior power which an organised army possessed over a collection of the kind of troops hitherto employed in Italy was demonstrated only seven months later at Fornovo, when Charles's army (though then in by no means the same state of fitness) attacked and beat off a force of the above description which was more than four times stronger numerically and had every advantage of position (chap. xi. pp. 340-341).

[2] What this meant was seen a few years later at Prato (chap. xi. pp. 380-381).

would have been bound to resist to the end and to fall with honour. But this was not the case; the French King had no special quarrel with the Florentine state; so that the sack of the city would have been endured on behalf of another state which had no claim upon Florence for such a sacrifice, and which, though principally concerned, had sent no force to join with her in opposing the French King.

Pietro, therefore, chose the second course, and in order to persuade Charles VIII. to accept terms and pass without further aggression through Tuscany by the coast road which avoided Florence, went off in person to the camp of the King of France to try and achieve this by a personal interview. He there saw for the first time what a regular organised army was like, and, if he had not done so before, must have realised at once how futile would be any opposition which Florence could offer to such a force, and that it could only have a result which he was bound at all costs to prevent. The French King agreed to pass peaceably through Tuscany, but would not consent to avoid the capital, and required, as the condition on which Florence should be spared from assault and her territory from devastation, that Pisa, and the fortresses of Sarzana, Sarzanello, Ripafratta, and Pietrasanta[1] should be held by him until the conquest of Naples had been completed. Most of these places were already in Charles's possession, while it was only a question of days before all would be so; and he had power to hold

[1] All places on Charles's line of march. He had already taken three of the four fortresses.

them for as long as he chose; so that Pietro in agreeing to these terms did not make any very great concession.[1]

Pietro returned to Florence on the 8th November in expectation that the citizens would be thankful, under the circumstances, for what he had achieved. But the seed so assiduously sown by his cousins at last bore fruit; the citizens had not seen Charles's army, and did not know their own weakness and the French King's strength; their pride was wounded by the idea of the surrender of fortresses; and the combined result brought matters to a climax. Pietro was met by a storm of indignation; the measure of his unpopularity was now full; and there was a general clamour for his banishment and that of his whole family. The Signoria assembled, and promptly passed a decree banishing the Medici permanently from the state of Florence (9th November 1494).

This banishment was not carried out in the dispassionate manner of that in Cosimo's time. They were driven to fly from the city for their lives;[2] and the Signoria subsequently offered a reward of 4,000 florins for the head of Pietro, and 2,000 florins for that of his brother Giovanni; while the mob were permitted by the Government to plunder the Medici Palace, which we are told "was sacked from roof to cellar." And so,

[1] It is significant on this point that the deputation sent by the citizens themselves a few days afterwards did not attempt to do otherwise than agree to the same concession (chap. xi. p. 335).

[2] Pietro fled by the Porta San Gallo; his brother, the young Cardinal Giovanni, disguised himself as a Dominican monk, conveyed as many as possible of their most valuable literary possessions to the monastery of San Marco, and then fled and joined Pietro at Venice.

notwithstanding all that the Medici had during a hundred years expended from their private fortune to benefit the citizens of Florence, there were now robbed from them, and scattered to the four winds, all those treasures of art gathered with so much diligent labour by Cosimo Pater Patriae, Piero il Gottoso, and Lorenzo the Magnificent—a greater collection of art treasures than was to be found in any other single building in Europe. The destruction of this invaluable collection is pathetically related by the scholarly Bernardo Rucellai in a long lament over the priceless treasures, both of learning and art, destroyed on this occasion. In the former category were valuable manuscripts in every language, collected at great expense, and most of them quite unable to be replaced. Not less deplorable was the loss in the domain of Art. Irrespective of pictures and statues which were plundered, many valuable pieces of ancient sculpture, exquisite gems, cameos, vases, and countless specimens of the work of the minor arts were destroyed, sharing in a general ruin which reduced a palace which had been the admiration of every foreign visitor, and the chief ornament of the city, to the condition of one sacked by an enemy's troops. The contemporary French historian, Philippe de Commines, after giving a long list of the valuable things lost in this great act of Vandalism computes that, over and above what was carried off, the money value of what was destroyed represented "more than 100,000 crowns.[1] All that energetic labour and artistic taste had collected in half a century was dispersed or destroyed in a day.

[1] Equal in our present money to about £300,000.

We have a glimpse of one item among these plundered treasures eight years later, viz., the four valuable vases which had belonged to Lorenzo, and which we find in 1502 offered for sale in Florence. Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, writes in that year requesting that Leonardo da Vinci, who was then in Florence, would inspect them for her, as she heard they were for sale, and would send her a report on them and the price at which they were valued. Leonardo, having examined them, was in ecstasies over their beauty; he reported that all four had Lorenzo's name engraved in Roman letters on the body of the vase, and as to the prices at which they were to be obtained, said, "the crystal vase, all of one piece and very fine, is valued at 350 ducats; the jasper vase, of variegated colours and encrusted with pearls and rubies, on a gold stand, at 240 ducats; the agate vase, at 200 ducats; and the jasper vase on a silver stand, at 150 ducats." They were evidently too costly an ornament for the Marchioness of Mantua, and she did not buy them. They therefore remained in Florence, and some fifty years afterwards were sought out and repurchased by Cosimo I., and are now in the Gem Room of the Uffizi Gallery.[1]

One of the statues taken from the Medici Palace was made to serve as a monument of this casting forth by Florence, in ignominy and ruin, of the family which had so long made that city's greatness. The Signoria took from amongst the plundered works of art the bronze statue of

[1] Though their gold and silver stands, and the pearls and rubies with which they were encrusted, have disappeared.

Judith slaying Holofernes, executed by Donatello for Cosimo Pater Patriae, which had always stood in the centre of the *cortile* of the palace, and set it up in front of the Palazzo della Signoria, engraving an inscription round its base declaring it set up "as a warning to all who should think to tyrannise over Florence."[1] The inscription was a fine-sounding one, and helped (as was intended) to justify the action of those who had cast forth Pietro and his family, because he had been unable to protect Florence from a foreign aggression with which they themselves were just as little able to cope. But it gave no real picture of the case. Pietro had in no sense tyrannised over Florence; he had not the power to do so, and he never committed any act which showed that he even had the wish. All that he had done was to offend her republican sentiments by what the citizens called a haughty demeanour. In after years, when a real tyrant came to rule over them, they were to find by most bitter experience how very different a thing "tyranny" was from the matters, chiefly of mere outward behaviour, which had called forth their complaints against the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent. When, with their Signoria abolished, they groaned under the tyranny of Cosimo I., with the utmost joy would they have welcomed back the free and untrammelled existence which they had enjoyed under the rule of Pietro the Unfortunate.

The members of the family who were thus hurriedly driven forth from Florence were the three

[1] The statue, with the inscription placed upon it by the Signoria, still stands in the Loggia de' Lanzi, facing the Palazzo Vecchio, and is the memorial of an important episode in the history of Florence. In after years, when Cosimo I. ruled Florence with a rod of iron from that palace, the inscription must have had a strangely sarcastic flavour.

brothers, Pietro (then twenty-three), Giovanni (eighteen), and Giuliano (fifteen), with their first cousin, Giulio (sixteen);[1] also Pietro's wife, Alfonsina, and their two infant children, Lorenzo and Clarice. They fled first to Bologna, and thence to Venice, where they obtained a temporary asylum. Pietro's ignoble second cousins, Lorenzo and Giovanni, were not included in the decree of banishment. They gained immunity for themselves by abandoning for a time (to their permanent discredit) the name of Medici, and taking instead the name of "Popolano," erasing the family arms from the outside of their palace.

Sixty years had passed since the Medici had last been cast out with ignominy from Florence. They were now for the second time to suffer the hardships of exile. The sentence passed against them furnished an example of how evanescent is popular favour and the memory of public benefits. All the deliverance of his countrymen from unjust taxation and the tyranny of the nobles effected by Giovanni di Bicci, all the "unwearied generosity" of thirty years which had won for Cosimo the title of "Father of his country," all the prosperity of Florence wrought by Lorenzo, were forgotten as completely as though they had never been. And the edifice founded by Giovanni di Bicci, gradually built up by Cosimo, strengthened by the qualities of Piero, and perfected by the ability of Lorenzo, fell in ruins. The Medici were back again at the point they had occupied before Giovanni di Bicci began to

[1] The illegitimate son of Lorenzo's brother Giuliano, *see* p. 244.

lay the foundations of the family greatness; but with the additional obstacle to their ascending the ladder again, that now, by the combined effect of Pietro's failure to follow the line of conduct laid down by his father, and the disaffection stirred up by his cousins, their popularity was gone, and the citizens were determined to keep them out of Florence for the future.

This second banishment meant the entire ruin which had been aimed at, but not achieved, in the first. The change in their circumstances was most complete; the numerous activities of public life, which for four generations had become the accustomed occupations of this family, their patronage of Art and Letters, the social pleasures of an exalted station and great wealth, all were at an end; and, deprived of all their possessions, they went forth to lead a nomadic and poverty-stricken existence for eighteen years.

Pietro spent all the remaining nine years of his life in fruitless endeavours to get himself reinstated in Florence by force of arms, not seeing that this was just the way to defeat his object, by setting the Florentines still more against him. His father, had he found himself in a like position, would have left no stone unturned to make the Florentines recall him voluntarily; but Pietro lacked his father's wisdom, and so turned to those measures which could by no possibility obtain for him success. He became a pawn on the political chessboard to be used whenever any state found itself in opposition to Florence; and in this way various states in turn lent him troops, with which he made three successive attempts

against Florence, which all proved abortive. In these endeavours the Medici brothers wandered from state to state in Italy, but after five years of failure, which rightly or wrongly they attributed to Pietro's proverbial misfortune, his two brothers and their cousin Giulio separated themselves from him, declaring that they should never succeed while combined with him. Having already sought the protection in turn of most of the states of Italy, and finding themselves becoming regarded as troublesome refugees, the trio, Giovanni, Giuliano, and Giulio, determined to abandon Italy for a time, and in 1499 started on a wandering tour "to traverse the principal countries of Europe."

They went first into Germany, where on reaching Ulm they were arrested and sent under a guard to the Emperor Maximilian, who, however, released them and treated them well, complimenting Giovanni "on bearing his adverse fortune with patience, and on his prudence in employing the time which was thus at his disposal in gaining a knowledge of foreign countries." Experiencing various adventures, and being several times detained in custody, they visited during the years 1499 and 1500 most of the principal cities in Germany, Flanders, and France, and desired to have visited England, but were prevented by adverse weather from crossing the sea. Returning through France, they at length arrived at Marseilles, whence they proceeded to Genoa, where they resided with Giovanni's sister, Maddalena Cibò. From Genoa after a time they proceeded to Rome, where Alexander VI., having now cause of offence against

Florence, laid aside his previous ill-will and treated them with consideration.

Meanwhile Pietro, finding no more help obtainable elsewhere, had joined himself to the French, and in 1501 received a vague promise of assistance from Louis XII., which, however, came to nothing. Eventually Pietro, unfortunate to the last, accompanying the French army in their campaign in southern Italy, was, during the confusion of the retreat towards Gaeta after their disastrous defeat on the Garigliano, upset in the boat in which he was conveying down the river to Gaeta four pieces of heavy artillery which he had saved from capture by the enemy, and was drowned (December 1503).[1]

Botticelli has painted a well-known portrait of Pietro (Plate XXVII.), which hangs in the Uffizi Gallery, and, as he knew him well, it is certain to be a good likeness.[2] He has dark brown hair, and the remarkably fine eyes which (through many generations) were a noted characteristic of his family, while his face has a melancholy ex-

[1] Pietro's body was subsequently recovered, and was buried in the abbey of Monte Casino, where in 1552 Cosimo I. erected a handsome monument to his memory.

[2] It would seem as though Antonio Pollajuolo also gives us a contemporary likeness of Pietro, corroborating that by Botticelli. There is in the Kaiser Friedrick Museum at Berlin a picture by Pollajuolo of *David*, in which the latter, represented in the dress of a young Florentine noble, and with the active athletic figure which all accounts record of Pietro, has a face extraordinarily like that of Botticelli's *Pietro the Unfortunate*. Miss Cruttwell, in her *Antonio Pollajuolo*, draws attention to the similarity between the two pictures, saying :—"The features are identical. In both paintings we see the same delicate face with prominent cheek-bones, the same heavy-lidded, pale grey eyes, the same shock of brown hair growing low on the broad forehead, the same curved, melancholy mouth." Pollajuolo, as we know from a letter of his, paid a visit to Florence from Rome in July 1494, and had some communication with Pietro.

pression, attributable to his invariable ill-fortune. He wears a scarlet cap, and holds in both hands a medallion of his great-grandfather, Cosimo, appealing to the people of Florence, by the memory of him to whom they had themselves given the title of "Father of his country," not to treat his descendants as they were doing. This portrait, always known to be by Botticelli, was formerly thought to represent Pico della Mirandola; while another suggestion has in recent years been made[1] that it represents Giovanni, the son of Cosimo, who died in 1463. As, however, Giovanni (*see* Plate IV.) died as a man of forty-two when Botticelli was only nineteen, it is sufficiently obvious that the portrait (which represents a man of twenty-four or twenty-five) cannot be that of Giovanni.[2] It undoubtedly represents Pietro the Unfortunate, and has been correctly so labelled by the authorities of the Uffizi Gallery. The medallion held up in the hands and presented to the spectator (and forming the most prominent feature of the picture), is by itself sufficient to be absolutely convincing on the point; for that particular appeal to the memory of Cosimo Pater Patriae would be quite meaningless as regards either Pico della Mirandola or Giovanni; it would, in fact, not be applicable in the case of any one else than Pietro the Unfortunate. The picture was evidently painted a year or two after Pietro's banishment; either for himself, or one of the exiled Medici party. Botticelli being the "court painter" of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and almost living in the family, had known Pietro

[1] *Sandro Botticelli*, by H. P. Horne, p. 27.
[2] *See* also Appendix IX.

from the latter's very childhood, and owing, as he did, all his career, first to Piero il Gottoso, and afterwards to Lorenzo, undoubtedly sympathised much with the family in being driven from Florence, and mourned over the destruction of all their art treasures and the ruin of this great house. The feature of the medallion [1] is just such a touch as Botticelli delighted to introduce in order to make his picture tell its own story.

Having seen the Medici, in the fifth generation of the family, banished for the second time from their country, and before we enter on those eighteen years in which Florence lost all the power and prosperity she had enjoyed for sixty years, we may take a brief glance at what this family had achieved during the first hundred years of their course, and may also examine how far the two charges which have been referred to [2] are justly to be made against them, so far as this portion of their history is concerned.

Looking back at the position in the year 1400 there appear to be two grounds on which (irrespective of more personal considerations) the Medici justly deserve fame; first, their raising Florence to so exalted a position, and, second, the results they accomplished in the domain of Learning and Art.

From a petty state which did not exceed in

[1] The gold medallion is very peculiarly executed. Instead of being painted, it is *an actual cast*, taken from the medal itself, and inserted into the material of the picture, the cast being then gilded all over by the painter.

[2] Chap. ii. p. 16.

power and influence many others around it, the Medici had gradually raised Florence until she had become practically the capital city of Italy, not only exceeding in power the other states (such as Pisa, Lucca, Siena, Mantua, Ferrara, Urbino, and others) which had formerly been her equals, but also, as a city, surpassing in grandeur, prosperity, and intellectual eminence even Rome, Venice, Milan, and Naples; and out of Italy no city at that time could compete with these. When on the banishment of the Medici the army of Charles VIII. entered Florence we are told, "They saw a city which immeasurably surpassed any at that time in France, and could not contain their astonishment at the grandeur of its palaces and public buildings,[1] and the culture and refinement of its inhabitants, which they admitted to be far superior to their own."

But the second point is of far wider importance. The Medici have a just right to fame for the permanent benefits which they conferred on mankind at large by their fostering care over Learning and Art, and their readiness to expend a colossal fortune upon these things in an age before men had yet fully learnt to appreciate their value. This liberality was specially important in regard to the resuscitation of Learning, since this was a work which could not have been carried out without an expenditure such as the Medici alone among families of that period could afford.[2] And it was well for mankind that the Medici, through four generations, were ready to

[1] Yet these troops had already seen Milan, Pavia, Piacenza, Pisa, and various other cities of Italy.

[2] Chap. ix. pp. 271-275.

shower their wealth, not upon the ostentatious display of riches which was common enough around them, but upon the resuscitation of Learning and the advancement of Art. Europe to-day reaps the result of this their character, and owes them immeasurable gratitude for all that they did, and were, in this particular.

Turning to examine the charge that the Medici deprived their country of its liberty and exalted themselves into tyrants over it, it would appear that this charge involves considerable wresting from their proper meaning of both the word "liberty" and the word "tyrant." The only "liberty" which the Medici took away was the freedom to indulge in an internecine strife which made life in Florence one perpetual faction-fight—a state of things under which no previous government had been able to protect the lives and property of the citizens. With no due degree of liberty did the Medici rule interfere, and life in Florence in their time was as free as in any modern state. While as regards the word "tyrant" it is sufficient to observe that a tyranny cannot exist without a bodyguard of troops to support and protect the ruler when his acts are tyrannical or opposed to the will of the people. Wealth alone cannot create a tyranny; for even should it go the length of purchasing the suffrages of the majority of the citizens, its power still remains based upon the votes of the majority, and the minority (even though they may have much to say regarding the means by which these have been obtained) cannot call such a power a tyranny without misuse of terms. The Medici rule

rested solely on popularity, and a rule which rests on that basis has no power to tyrannise. This was fully proved when, two years after Lorenzo's death, and simply because the popularity which had formed the sole basis of his power was lost, Florence with only a word sent his successor and his whole family into exile.

The usual theory put before us regarding the Medici is that it was by craft and dissimulation that they rose to power in Florence. It was not so. Nor amongst a people so abnormally well versed (through two hundred years of political intrigue) in every form of craft and dissimulation could that method ever have succeeded; there was no race in Europe with whom it would have so surely failed. It was by the display of a pre-eminent ability in the conduct of public affairs, it was by a large-minded magnanimity constantly evinced in their dealings with those brought in contact with them, it was by their defence of the people against the oppression of the nobles, by their freedom from arrogance, their clemency in victory over crafty and ungenerous foes, and a generosity which knew no bounds in spending their private wealth for the benefit of their fellow-countrymen; it was by *these* qualities that the Medici rose to power in Florence. And we have this corroborated by Voltaire, who says of the Medici that "no family ever obtained power by so just a title": a statement which one such as Voltaire would certainly never have made had they obtained it either by force or by craft.

With regard to the second of the two charges, it is truly a most significant fact when we find that amidst all the virulent abuse which has been poured forth by so many pens during three centuries upon

these five generations of the Medici no accusation of murder has ever been made against either Giovanni di Bicci, Piero il Gottoso, Lorenzo the Magnificent, or Pietro the Unfortunate. So that if we except the single case of the accusation[1] made by Cavalcanti against Cosimo Pater Patriae of complicity in the death of Baldaccio d'Anghiari, which is rejected by all reliable historians, the whole five generations of the Medici whose lives are covered by these hundred years are free from any charge of murder. Yet this is during a period (1400-1503) specially notable for such crimes, and when the records of almost all other states[2] show a long catalogue of thoroughly authenticated murders committed by their rulers.[3]

It is said to be the just penalty of greatness to endure severer criticism than is applied to others. And certainly the Medici may be held to exemplify the fact. The history of that time is full of cases of families[4] who were seizing upon thrones, and wading through blood to gain them, without any higher object than that of enriching themselves. Yet the Medici, who took a more patriotic course, while they certainly evinced (however its degree may be disputed) a higher aim, have been criticised and condemned as these others have never been. The accusation that they "made themselves despots in order to extract from a down-trodden people wealth to spend upon themselves" has been

[1] Chap. iv. pp. 93-95.

[2] Milan, Rome, Naples, Venice, Ferrara, Mantua, Rimini, and many others.

[3] In the Este family at Ferrara, for instance, such murders were incessant during this very period.

[4] *E.g.*, the Tudors in England, and the Sforza, Riario, and many others in Italy.

made of a family whose liberality, in spending their private fortune[1] upon matters for the public benefit, exceeded all that has been elsewhere known in history. It was not the Florentines, but the citizens of London and Paris, Lyons and Bruges, Genoa and Venice, who supplied the income which the Medici spent, to so limited an extent upon themselves, and to so large an extent upon Florence.[2] Nor will the assertion that they "destroyed the liberties of Florence in order to exalt themselves into despots" continue to be tenable when their rule is compared with that set up at this same epoch by Louis XI. in France or by Henry VII. in England; or when we note that "the citizens of Florence enjoyed under the Medici a far greater degree of representative government than the people of either France or England." Had not the Medici established the kind of rule they did, the Pazzi, the Capponi, the Strozzi, and others would have headed various factions, as the Donati, the Cerchi, and the Albizzi had done before them; and none of that internal peace and prosperity, that national importance and cultured eminence, would have resulted which Florence was so thankful to possess while it lasted, and so proud to look back upon after it had passed away.

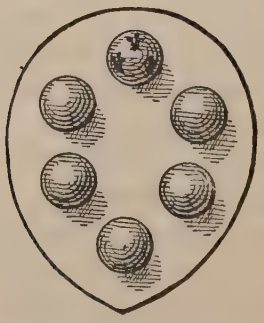
Nor does a wider outlook fail to give evidence on the same point. Throughout the greater part of the fifteenth century the rule of the Medici, by its suppression of internal strife, the consequent increase of weight in international politics, and

[1] Amassed in a banking business which covered all Europe.

[2] We have, for instance, seen the *Libro di Ragione* testifying that Cosimo's charitable expenditure amounted to a sum more than double the entire income of the Florentine state (chap. iv. p. 107).

the powerful assistance given to Learning and Art, produced results to Florence which were the envy of all surrounding states. And the failure of the latter to advance in a similar way, both politically and in Art, has been directly attributed to the absence of any family with the capacity to do for them what the Medici did for Florence. Thus as regards Art it has often been pointed out that up to the time when the Medici arose, Siena, for instance, was on a level with Florence, but from that time forward could no longer compete with her. While as regards politics it has been remarked by Professor Langton Douglas[1] that Siena, hitherto equal in power to Florence, was left behind by the latter, "owing to that faction-fighting which the Medici rule made impossible in Florence." We see, therefore, that to the very fact for which on behalf of Florence the Medici have been condemned, other states have attributed all Florence's greatness.

[1] *Siena*, by Langton Douglas.



The Medici arms in the time of Lorenzo, and afterwards (six balls, with on one of them the French *fleur-de-lys*).

CHAPTER XI

INTERREGNUM

(1494-1512)

On the same day that Pietro and his family fled from Florence, Charles VIII. entered Pisa, and thereupon declared that city "free from the Florentine yoke." The Signoria sent an embassy (which included Savonarola) to the King to protest against this action as to Pisa, and to treat with him, but the only reply they could extract was, "Once in the great city all shall be arranged." Savonarola had prophesied that a foreign invader should come to chastise the states of Italy for their profligate ways; the first of those states was now beginning to discover what forms such chastisement might take. The Republic, though they had exiled Pietro owing to his inability to prevent the French King's advance, found themselves as little able to do so as he had been, and eight days afterwards Charles VIII. entered Florence in the style of a victorious monarch entering a conquered city; while the Florentines found themselves required to accommodate in their midst an army of twenty thousand men. And to have a mediæval army of another nationality thus placed was a critical business; at any moment the smallest *contretemps* might produce an explosion and the plunder and

sack of the city. It may be judged therefore with what pleasure the citizens of Florence saw this army march into their streets.

As this was the first standing army ever seen by Europe, and as we know something of what standing armies have become during the intervening four hundred years, it will be interesting to have a look at this first one; to stand, as it were, in the crowd at the Frediano gate on that 17th November 1494, and watch this army as it passes into Florence.

It consisted of 3,000 cavalry, "the flower of the French chivalry," 5,000 Gascon infantry, 5,000 Swiss infantry, 4,000 Breton archers, 2,000 cross-bowmen, and a strong train of artillery, the latter drawn for the first time by horses, instead of oxen, a new thing in that age. The general appearance of these troops has been described for us by an old chronicler, who evidently watched them closely that day, and gives a vivid description of this entry into Florence. He says:—

"The King of France entered the city at the Porta San Frediano, riding under a rich canopy borne by four knights, two on either side; and on each side of him rode his marshals. The royal body-guard followed, consisting of a hundred of the handsomest youths of France, and two hundred knights of France on foot, in splendid dresses. Then came the Swiss guard with their brilliant uniforms of various colours, having halberts of burnished steel, their officers wearing rich plumes on their helmets. . . . The centre consisted of the Gascons, short, light, active men, whose numbers seemed never ending. After these came the cavalry, whose splendid appearance was admired

by all, and in which there were to be found the most noble young men of France. They had engraved armour, mantles of richest brocade, banners of velvet embroidered with gold, chains of gold, and ornaments of gold. The cuirassiers presented a hideous appearance, with their horses looking like monsters, from their ears and tails being cut quite short. Then came the archers, extraordinarily tall men from Scotland and other northern countries, and they looked more like wild beasts than men."[1]

Guicciardini (who was then a boy of twelve), speaking of the whole procession, says it was "a spectacle in itself very grand, but one for which the spectators had small liking, by reason of the dread and terror with which it filled their minds." As regards Charles VIII. himself,[2] the incapable youth who wielded this formidable weapon, Guicciardini says that he was short, ugly, deformed, and altogether uneducated, and in all matters that he took in hand displayed an entire want of prudence and judgment; while Philippe de Comines says that he was "weak, wilful, and surrounded by foolish counsellors." Such was the youth at whose mercy Florence now lay.

The army was quartered about the city on the unwilling inhabitants, and Charles proceeded to the despoiled and dismantled Medici Palace, where he took up his abode. There next day he summoned the Signoria before him to hear the humiliating terms which he intended to impose on the city. But the ancient spirit of Florence was as strong as ever, and when these terms were read

[1] *Storia di Firenze*, by Cerretani.
[2] There is a bust of Charles VIII. in the Bargello Museum.

out to them the members of the Signoria utterly refused to accept them. Whereupon the King flew into a rage and swore that if the treaty he had dictated were not forthwith signed they should have war; that he would sound his trumpets, call out his troops, and sack the city. Upon this one of the senators, Piero Capponi, gave that answer which has passed into a Florentine proverb: "If you sound your trumpets we will sound our bells." Charles knew what that meant, for he had on the day before seen a brief example of it in connection with a false alarm; he knew that it meant the ringing of the great bell, "La Vacca," which hung in the tower of the Palazzo della Signoria, and which when it sounded out over Florence[1] would call out into the streets the whole male population of the city, armed and ready to fall on the French troops, scattered in their various quarters, and before they could offer any collective resistance. He would find himself in a hornets' nest. Charles reflected for a moment, and then passing the matter off with a bad joke gave in, and Florence was saved.[2] A less humiliating treaty was drawn up and agreed to, though it was not a whit more satisfactory for Florence than that for agreeing to which Pietro the Unfortunate had incurred such a storm of indignation from the same men. Its chief articles were that Pisa, and the fortresses of Sarzana, Sarzanello, Ripafratta, and Pietrasanta,

[1] Its sound was compared to the lowing of a cow, and when its deep voice was heard, men said, "La vacca muggia" ("the cow is lowing"), meaning that there was a general summons. It could be heard in every part of Florence.

[2] The above episode, in which his bravery saved Florence at so critical a juncture, has caused the statue of Piero Capponi to find a place in the gallery of honour in the Uffizi colonnade.

should remain in Charles's possession until the conquest of Naples was complete, and that Florence should pay him an indemnity of 120,000 ducats. And two days later Charles marched his army out again, and departed for Rome *en route* to Naples.

On Charles's arrival before Rome, Pope Alexander VI. took refuge in the castle of St Angelo, but was induced to come forth, and to give Cæsar Borgia as a hostage; and after spending a month in Rome Charles marched on towards Naples. Alfonso II., King of Naples, had no lack of courage or military ability. His bravery at the battle of Otranto against the Turks had won him military renown. Nevertheless, he made no endeavour to defend his kingdom on this occasion. Fearing the strength of the French army he fled to Sicily; and Charles VIII. entered Naples on the 22nd February 1495 as a conqueror.

But while he spent his time there in triumphs and festivals a formidable confederacy was formed to crush him, consisting of the Emperor Maximilian, Ferdinand, King of Arragon, the Pope, Venice, and even Ludovico Sforza, by whose invitation he had invaded Italy. Meanwhile his army, wasted by its excesses in Naples, was rapidly dwindling by disease. Charles saw no safety but in an immediate march back to France. Leaving part of his army in possession of Naples, he in the beginning of June started on his return march, proceeding by Rome and Siena, and hastening as much as possible. But the allies assembled a force of 40,000 men to bar his way, awaiting him on the northern side of the Apennines. Owing to losses by disease and the detachment left at Naples, Charles's army was

reduced to 9,000 men. He reached Siena on the 13th June, and Pontremoli on the 29th June; from there he crossed the Apennines by the pass of that name, an operation which took him six days. The battle which ensued was fought on the 6th July, on the banks of the Taro at Fornovo, on the northern side of the Apennines. The French had the greatest difficulty in transporting their artillery over the mountains, and most of it arrived too late to take part in the battle, which, though very short, was the bloodiest that had taken place in Italy for two centuries. The Italians were entirely routed, and lost 3,000 men, including their second-in-command, Rodolfo Gonzaga, uncle of the Marquis of Mantua; the French only lost, Commines says, about a hundred men, but the Italian writers say a thousand. Charles showed much personal courage, and much bad generalship; nevertheless, the French army succeeded in driving their opponents off the field, and continued their march towards Asti, though their long line of baggage, impeded by the difficulties of the mountains, for the most part fell a prey to the enemy; so that both sides claimed the victory. Charles reached Asti on the 15th July, and remained there until October, when he returned to France. The King of Naples soon after regained Naples; and the sole results to Charles VIII. of his expedition were the debts he had incurred to meet its expenses.

The superior power possessed by the new engine in war which was wielded by Charles VIII. so inefficiently was very clearly shown at Fornovo.[1]

[1] Writers (Symonds included) have universally misrepresented this battle to the disparagement of the French; besides failing altogether to notice the important military point which gives it special interest.

At that battle the allies had 40,000 men, Charles only 9,000. The latter fought under every disadvantage; they were weakened by disease, "weary with long marches, insufficient food, and bad quarters,"[1] and had to fight as they emerged from the difficulties of a mountain pass, proverbially the position in which a force finds it hardest to bring up its full strength. On the other hand, their opponents were "fresh and well cared for,"[1] and awaited the French on the banks of a river, the passage of which the latter had to force. Nevertheless, as the result of the attack which the French delivered, the Italian force "suffered so severely that, though they still far outnumbered the French, no persuasion could make them rally and renew the fight."[1] Charles's army, though less than a quarter the numerical strength of their foes, badly commanded, and fighting under every disadvantage, beat back their enemy, forced the passage of the Taro, broke through the cordon drawn between them and their objective, and continued their march; thus gaining the honour of the day, even though most of their baggage was plundered in their rear by the enemy. Fornovo was the first occasion on which a standing army was tested in battle, and the results showed very distinctly how much greater was its power than that of the kind of troops hitherto employed.

This expedition of Charles VIII. into Italy, although it was so barren of immediate results, had great ultimate consequences, and was a turning point in the history of Europe. Michelet says that it "was no less than the revelation of Italy

[1] Symonds.

to the nations of the north." It ushered in that new era already mentioned, in which the northern nations were to oust the Italian states from the foremost place in the politics of Europe, a process which was accompanied by a state of almost constant war in Italy.

During the eighteen years that followed Florence sternly kept the Medici out of her territories, and foiled all schemes for their return. It was made death to be found guilty of attempting to restore that family; and in 1497 old Bernardo de Nero, who was seventy-two years of age and had been three times Gonfaloniere, being found guilty of this offence, was beheaded.[1]

This period (1494-1512), which in a history relating to the Medici power in Florence it is convenient to call the "Interregnum," and which covers the pontificates of Popes Alexander VI. and Julius II., was an eventful one in the history of Italy and of Europe. But Florence, her destinies no longer swayed by the family which had known how to make their country strong and powerful, took an altogether insignificant part in these events, more so than any other state in Italy; whilst the struggle of contending nations was taking place all round her she was entirely occupied in ignoble turmoils over domestic politics. She suffered severely in consequence, having to endure heavy taxation in order to pay subsidies now to one and now to another of the combatants, and only just missed being captured by Cæsar Borgia,

[1] Though not in the courtyard of the Bargello, as depicted in George Eliot's *Romola* (*see* vol. ii. p. 239, footnote).

before whom she had most ignominiously to humble herself.

So far, therefore, as Florence is concerned, the record of this period consists of little else than internal discord and misgovernment. Unceasing turmoils between rival factions, fresh constitutions formed every few months, an administration utterly corrupt, a total decline in political influence abroad, and anarchy, injustice, and misery at home, are the prevailing features of this period. And nothing could better have vindicated the rule which the Medici had exercised than the state of things which supervened when it was withdrawn. Some have contrived even here to found a charge against that family, declaring this due to their having "enervated the Florentines." It was, however, simply the reversion to those conditions which had obtained before the Medici arose, and which reappeared upon the removal of the only power which had ever been able to keep Florence free from such conflicts.

During the first four years of the above period (1494-1498) the chief influence in the State was exercised by Savonarola. Upon the departure of Charles VIII. one change after another in the form of government took place accompanied by constant disturbances, until at length an end to these was put for a time by Savonarola, who, in accordance with the cry of the people for a constitution on the lines of that of Venice, formed the *Grand Council*, comprising every citizen of twenty-nine years of age who, or whose father, grandfather, or great-grandfather, had held one of the higher magis-

tracies; the number of members was limited to 1,000, with a change of members every six months.[1] Savonarola also made strenuous efforts to put down the luxury and profligacy to which the Florentines had become addicted; and for a while he succeeded. The extraordinary movement[2] which he brought about is without a parallel; Florence for a time put on a Puritan garb. And the effect manifested itself in many differently minded men. Baccio della Porta became a monk in the monastery of San Marco, taking the name Fra Bartolommeo. Two of the Della Robbia family became priests. Lorenzo di Credi spent the rest of his life in the monastery of Sta. Maria Novella. Botticelli became an ardent disciple of Savonarola, and would paint only pictures inspired by his sermons. Cronaca, the celebrated story-teller, would talk only of Savonarola. Michelangelo to the end of his life retained a vivid remembrance of the powerful voice and impassioned gestures of the great preacher, and pondered over his sermons in his old age.

Among the many notable scenes which the Piazza della Signoria has witnessed none is more remarkable than that strange bonfire for the destruction of worldly allurements, the "Vanities," which took place in 1497, at the time of the Carnival, in the midst of a concourse of the entire city. Harford, in his *Life of Michelangelo*, says:—

[1] The great hall in the Palazzo della Signoria (Palazzo Vecchio) was constructed by Savonarola in order to accommodate this *Consiglio Maggiore*.

[2] *See* Mrs Oliphant's *Makers of Florence*, Professor Villari's *Life of Savonarola*, and George Eliot's *Romola*.

"A pyramidal scaffold was erected opposite the palace of the Signoria. At its base were to be seen false hair, false beards, masquerading dresses, rouge pots, cards and dice, mirrors and perfumery, beads and trinkets of various sorts. Higher up were arranged books and drawings, busts, and portraits of the most celebrated Florentine beauties. . . . Even Fra Bartolommeo was so carried away by the enthusiasm as to bring his life-academy studies. Lorenzo di Credi, another devoted follower of Savonarola, did the same. . . . The Signoria looked on from a balcony; guards were stationed to prevent unholy thefts; and as the fire rose there was a burst of chants, and the singing of the 'Te Deum' to the sound of trumpets and the clanging of bells."

But eventually the people got tired of a life bereft of their favourite "vanities"; and about the same time Savonarola's preaching, which had hitherto concerned itself with the errors of Florence, began to thunder against the far greater iniquities of Rome, and to urge for a reformation of the Church. And it was indeed high time for such a reformation; for the state of things at Rome was arousing universal indignation. Alexander VI. (Roderigo Borgia), who was Pope from 1492 to 1503, has been styled by Mosheim "the Nero among Popes," and the conjunction in him of shameless greed, perfidy, cruelty, and licentiousness brought the Papacy to the lowest moral depth it had touched since the dark age of the tenth century. His politics were governed solely by one consideration, that of acquiring, by whatever means, as many of the minor states as possible in order to form a sovereignty for his son, Cæsar Borgia, called by Ranke "a *virtuoso* in crime."

Such being the character of the Pope at the time, an earnest reformer like Savonarola could scarcely fail to give voice to what were becoming the sentiments of all Europe regarding the Papal court. His sermons began to denounce its iniquities and to press for a General Council to reform the Church. Neither Alexander VI. nor Cæsar Borgia had the smallest intention of suffering the fate which had overtaken Pope John XXIII. eighty years before, and one such sermon delivered in Rome would have promptly ended Savonarola's life. But in Florence he could not be so easily got at. The Pope did his utmost to silence him, and to get him into his power, but for some time unsuccessfully, he being too popular with the Florentines.

But Florence no longer had the strong government and united people which she had possessed when she hung an Archbishop and defied a Pope who attempted to stir up strife within her walls. Her condition now was just the reverse; and in a city torn by so many factions, and with a government become both weak and corrupt, it was easy to create a party hostile to the stern preacher of reform, and ready to perform the Pope's work. So that at length in 1498 Alexander VI. was able to send emissaries to Florence, who soon persuaded the Signoria to act as his agents in a crime which has brought permanent infamy, both on the Pope who ordered it, and on the government which carried it out. Meanwhile Savonarola had written letters to various sovereigns pressing them to assemble a General Council; so that the Pope was more anxious than ever to have him put out of life

with all speed. It was unfortunate for Savonarola that just at this juncture Charles VIII., on whom he chiefly relied (though it was reliance on a broken reed), was on the 5th April 1498 accidentally killed at the castle of Amboise by striking his head against the top of a low doorway. He was succeeded by his distant cousin, Louis XII.

On the 7th April a challenge by the rival community of the Franciscans to an ordeal by fire, to which Savonarola weakly agreed (and for which elaborate preparations were made, though the Signoria never intended it to be carried out), served the purpose of destroying his popularity with the people, who were furious when at the last moment the ordeal was vetoed. Accordingly on the 9th April Savonarola received a summons from the Signoria to surrender himself into their hands. The friars of San Marco refused to allow him to be taken from them to what all knew meant torture and death, and the church and monastery were furiously attacked by the troops of the Signoria during a whole day, and bravely defended. In the evening, however, on the troops forcing their way into the church, Savonarola refused to allow further bloodshed, and, after taking a sorrowful farewell of the brethren, surrendered himself to the troops. He was taken to the Palazzo della Signoria, imprisoned in the cell called the Alberghettino, and day after day subjected to torture, the Pope sending frequent messages to the Signoria to wring something from him which might serve as a ground for putting him to death.

Nevertheless, this was a difficult task; one, however, to which those who wished to stand well

with the Pope, turned all their evil ingenuity; with the result that the so-called trial became a mockery of justice. Seldom has there been a blacker page in the proceedings of any government than that relating to Savonarola's trial and condemnation. The criminal court by which in the ordinary course he should have been tried, the "Eight," not being supposed to be sufficiently hostile to him, had new members appointed to it, though the period of office of their predecessors had not expired. When, however, it became apparent that even this would not suffice to attain the desired result, a special court was constituted composed of seventeen commissioners, all of them Savonarola's avowed enemies. Even one of these, Bartolo Zati, when he learnt the nature of the work expected of him, refused to serve, declaring that he would take no part in a murder.

Savonarola was subjected to successive "trials," and during these, for a period of about sixteen days, was tortured daily; once he was placed on the rack fourteen times in a single day. Nevertheless, nothing could be proved against him or wrung from him, which his judges could twist into an admission of either treason or heresy.[1] So his enemies had to resort to forgery. A miscreant, named Ser Ceccone, a notary who had said to one of the judges, "If no case exists, one must be invented," was employed to take down the victim's replies while under torture. And this change in the arrangements produced the required results. In refutation of the supposition that on this last

[1] The Signoria, in a letter to the Pope, who had complained of the delay, stated:—"Even by long and arduous examination, continued for many days, and with the aid of torture, we could barely extort anything from him."

occasion Savonarola falsified his previous replies, Mr Hyett says as follows:—

"On the 19th April a document purporting to be a report of Savonarola's replies to the examiners was signed by him. It is probable that his signature was obtained by a trick, but, be this as it may, it is certain that the signed deposition had been falsified, or as one of the judges euphemistically put it, 'for a good purpose somewhat had been omitted from, and somewhat added to it.' On the strength of this garbled report many writers have said that he broke down under torture, and even Professor Villari gives a reluctant assent to this view, and offers an elaborate apology for his hero. But as evidence against Savonarola the document is not worth the paper it was written on. It is in part admittedly fictitious, and which parts of it are additions, and which alterations, or what has been omitted, it is impossible to discover. Everything tends to show that Savonarola, in spite of his physical infirmities, displayed on the rack heroic fortitude."[1]

On the 19th May the Papal commissioners charged with the final proceedings arrived in Florence. Nardi states that their instructions were "to put Savonarola to death were he even another St John the Baptist." On 20th May and the two following days, Savonarola underwent before them his third mock trial, being examined under worse torture than ever. The results of this final examination were never signed or made public, the trial being thus practically left unfinished. Nothing had been elicited from him proving his guilt of heresy or crime. Nevertheless,

[1] *Florence*, by F. A. Hyett.

on the evening of the 22nd May, after many days of torture, after every kind of fraud and injustice had been put in force, and as the result of a so-called trial not even legally completed, Savonarola, whose only crime was his denunciation of the vices of the Borgian Papacy and his appeals for its reformation, was condemned to death. And also the other two friars of San Marco who had been tried with him, Fra Domenico and Fra Silvestro. On the following morning, 23rd May 1498, the three companions were brought out of the Palazzo della Signoria on to the *ringhiera*, and after being subjected to various insults were conducted to the scaffold. And on the very spot where the bonfire of "the Vanities" had taken place, the reformer, who had a short time before been worshiped by Florence, was hanged and burnt in presence of the whole city.

Thus did Florence show before the eyes of Europe what the rule of the Medici had been to her. Such a crime as the above would have been as impossible under the rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent as under any government of the present day. In this episode we seem to see a totally different Florence from that of twenty years before; and instead of a united people, strong in their sense of justice, defying a Pope even though he was backed by numerous allies, we see a divided people and a corrupt and subservient government, ready at a Pope's command to set at naught every principle of justice, and to employ methods from which every honest Florentine revolted. The defiance of all law, the disgraceful frauds, the corruptibility of the judges,

and the faction-fighting through which alone the Pope was able to achieve his object, all showed how greatly Florence had in only four years deteriorated through the loss of that rule under which she had during the previous sixty years made herself great and respected. The crime of Savonarola's judicial murder is the strongest possible vindication of the rule which had been established by the Medici.

Botticelli (3).

That movement which exercised a permanent influence on so many others, had its effect also on Botticelli. The entire change in the mental atmosphere of Florence wrought by Savonarola during the years 1494-1498 caused a no less radical change in the character of Botticelli's pictures. So that we have now a third period in his painting.

(III.)

Just as Cronaca could talk only of Savonarola, so could Botticelli now paint only pictures which repeated the impassioned sermons of Florence's great preacher. Henceforth we have no more pictures from him of graceful Greek goddesses and classic myths, but picture after picture on the one subject of the Blessed Virgin and Child.

The same train of thought runs through them all. No longer does Botticelli paint her in all the joy of the Magnificat; it is now the sorrow of the Mater Dolorosa that is set before us, and with every variety of illustration. And in this too there is a distinction; it is not as the sorrowing Mother beneath the Cross that she is depicted, but as the young Mother with the ever-present

sword of a foreboding sorrow piercing her heart with the knowledge of that which was to come, of which others around her were ignorant, and in which, therefore, they could afford her no sympathy. Sometimes it is the Mother alone who feels this foreboding sorrow, sometimes it permeates both Mother and Child, but whether in her alone, or in both, this is always the prevailing thought. Speaking of these pictures, Steinmann says:—

"A presentiment of coming woe seems to cast its shadow on the Virgin's soul. . . . She embraces the Child with a half-repressed fervour of passionate love, but all the time the shadow of an underlying sorrow makes the flame of joy burn dimly."[1]

All this is in accord with Savonarola's sermons; and here we see Painting able to bring to our minds the words of a preacher dead four hundred years ago.

In doing this Botticelli introduces many touching details by which to bring his point home to those to whom he speaks. As examples the following may be taken:—

The Madonna of the pomegranate.—This picture (in its original frame)[2] hangs in the Tuscan room of the Uffizi Gallery. The Child Christ holds in His left hand a bitten pomegranate,[3] and looking with a sad expression straight at the beholder, holds up His right hand in blessing. Steinmann says:—"In this picture both Child and Mother are more than ever conscious of bearing the burden of all the sorrow of mankind." He considers this to

[1] *Botticelli*, by Steinmann.

[2] With golden lilies on a light blue ground. This picture is in much better preservation than the *Madonna of the Magnificat*, which has had many travels and suffered much therefrom.

[3] The pomegranate is a symbol of the Church, but the *bitten* pomegranate is the emblem of the Fall of Man.

be Botticelli's best picture. Hanging as it does opposite the *Madonna of the Magnificat*, the two are well placed for comparison, the one painted in Botticelli's earliest years, the other not less than thirty years afterwards; the keynote of the one, humility, of the other, foreboding sorrow.

The Madonna and Child in the Brera Gallery, Milan.—In this case the Child is sitting on the Virgin's knee, and is playing with a rough wreath of thorns and three nails, and looking up at her in wonderment at her sadness.

The Madonna and Child in the National Gallery, London.—The Virgin embraces the Child, who stands on her lap. He looks in her face, seeking for the cause of her sorrow, while her face and attitude express a deep tenderness, penetrated as usual with a profound sadness. This picture has been a good deal damaged in its travels, but the damage has spared the face of the Child Christ, which is particularly beautiful.

The Madonna of St Barnabas.—Painted for the convent of St Barnabas, and now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Florence. This picture has suffered (through damage in removal and attempted restoration) as regards the face of the Child Christ, which has been quite spoiled, but the rest of the painting is beautiful, and it is one of Botticelli's most admired works. Two angels stand on either side of the Madonna and Child, one holding up before her a crown of thorns, and the other, three nails, while two more angels hold back the curtains of the throne. The Virgin looks straight out before her with a sweet, sad expression. Six saints stand before the throne, representing

different types of mankind: St Michael, manly strength and beauty; St John the Baptist, asceticism; St Ambrose, the strong, practical bishop; St Augustine, theological learning; St Barnabas, unselfish devotion to the consolation of the miserable and oppressed; and St Catherine, womanly feeling. Steinmann, remarking on this picture, says:—

"It would seem as if Dante's wonderful characterisation of the Virgin struck the keynote of the whole picture, viz., his words, 'Umile ed alta, più che creatura' ('Humble and high beyond all other created being'). . . . Sitting on her throne under the velvet canopy, affectionately served by angels, venerated by saints, she yet can feel no joy. She gazes straight out before her, with a sad, far-away expression in her eyes—'humble and high,' in truth, yet sighing under the weight of her destiny, and with the sword already piercing her heart."

In one other point, noticeable in all these pictures, Botticelli differs markedly from the artists who were to follow in the next generation, led by Michelangelo. *Botticelli forces our whole attention on the subject, not on the painter.* In looking at them it is not of Botticelli that we think. As Steinmann says:—

"There never was a painter who so entirely forgot *himself* in his subject; and in these pictures he has concentrated his whole thoughts on the character of the Madonna; and there has been none since his day who was so unwearied in inventing new modes of treatment which should both bring the Virgin and Child into human

closeness to the beholder, and at the same time arouse his awe and veneration."

(IV.)

But a time came when, instead of Florence being swayed by Savonarola's sermons, it condemned him and put him to death; and for those who revered him the only feeling left was horror, both at the crime itself, and at the reign of anarchy and vice which succeeded it. And so now again we have a complete change in Botticelli's pictures, caused by the change in the circumstances around him, and have the pictures of his fourth and last period. In this there are (besides his sketches illustrating Dante's poem) only two pictures, but they are notable ones: viz. (i) *Calumny*, now in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, its general idea taken from Lucian's account of a picture on that subject by the Greek painter, Apelles;[1] and (ii) *The Nativity*, now in the National Gallery, London. The drawings illustrating Dante's *Divine Comedy* were executed at various times between 1492 and 1497, but were left unfinished; Botticelli, the ardent partisan of Savonarola, being thenceforth entirely engrossed with the tragedy of the latter's end.

The celebrated picture of *Calumny* is thus described:—

"The scene is laid in a stately judgment hall in the classic style, on the decoration of which every resource of art has been expended.

[1] Botticelli's somewhat different treatment of the subject can be seen by comparing his picture with the engraving representing the *Calumny* of Apelles taken from Lucian's description, to be seen in the collection of engravings in the Uffizi Gallery, No. 59.

Between its lofty arches there is a distant view of a calm sea; life-sized marble figures stand in the niches of the pillars of the hall (like the figures outside Or San Michele), and every vacant space is adorned with richly-gilded sculpture. It is a magnificent Renaissance building, which fancy imagines a place in which wisdom and justice alone would exist, a place of refuge in which poets and thinkers may prepare new intellectual achievements as they walk in this stately portico by the sea. Instead of this we witness a fearful deed of violence. In bitter contrast with the splendid marble all round, in ironical mockery of the solemn statues of justice and virtue on the walls, a noisy throng is dragging the innocent victim of calumny before the tribunal of the Unjust Judge, who sits with crown and sceptre on a richly-decorated throne. Two female figures, Ignorance and Suspicion, whisper in the long ass's ears of the Unjust Judge, while in front of him Envy declaims with imperious force. With his right hand Envy leads on Calumny, who holds a burning torch before her as a treacherous symbol of her pretended love of truth. She dashes impetuously forward, with her left hand grasping mercilessly the hair of her victim, who lies on the ground stripped naked, with his folded hands raised to heaven in assertion of his innocence. Calumny's appearance is plausible and crafty; her clothing is costly, and her two attendants, Fraud and Deception, are busy twining fresh roses in her golden hair. Behind these (as what follows from injustice and cruelty) comes the tormentor, Remorse, a hideous hag clothed from head to foot in ragged mourning attire, who, clasping her trembling hands before her, turns her face round over her shoulder to look at the figure behind her of naked Truth (a slim female figure recalling Botticelli's *Venus*),

who gazes upwards and lifts her right hand to heaven in adjuration against the scene of injustice, cruelty, and wrong."[1]

Now what does all this mean? At first sight this picture repels us by its strange scene of grotesque violence; but it has its meaning in the history of the time. For in this picture Botticelli writes for those who may come after, the story of how Savonarola was done to death. In the stately Renaissance hall, the refuge for poets and philosophers, with its solemn statues of Wisdom and Justice, and its profuse decoration by Art, Botticelli represents Florence as for sixty years *it had been.* In the Unjust Judge, with his ass's ears, seated on a throne with crown and sceptre which he is not fit to bear, and in the scene of violence enacted in front of him, the painter represents the government of Florence as *it had become*; still occupying the localities where such different sentiments had once prevailed. In the figures of Ignorance and Suspicion, Envy and Calumny, Fraud and Deception, he represents the motives and the methods which had prevailed to put to death their victim, Savonarola. While the figures of Remorse and Truth embody Botticelli's prophecy of what shall afterwards follow.[2]

[1] *Botticelli*, by Steinmann.

[2] Within the last five years there has been placed on the spot where Savonarola was burnt (replacing the former small plain slab) a larger one, bearing the following inscription: "Qui, dove con i suoi confratelli Fra Domenico Buonvicini e Fra Silvestro Maruffi il XXIII Maggio del MCCCCIXVIII per iniqua sentenza fu impiccato ed arso Fra Girolamo Savonarola, dopo quattro secoli fu collocata questa memoria." (Here, where with his brethren, Fra Domenico Buonvicini and Fra Silvestro Maruffi, on the 23rd May 1498, by an iniquitous sentence Fra Girolamo Savonarola was hanged and burnt, after four centuries has been placed this memorial.) And there it is customary with the Florentines on the 23rd May to lay bouquets of flowers to Savonarola's memory.

This picture was painted by Botticelli for his friend, Antonio Segni, in the year 1498 or 1499, and it is stated that it was not allowed to be seen by the public eye until after Botticelli's death; if so, this would help to confirm the above theory as to its meaning. It is, of course, deeply interesting both on account of the great preacher himself, and also as the powerful record given by one then living as to the way in which Savonarola's life was taken, and how false were the lies which then, and for many years afterwards, were sedulously promulgated regarding the self-accusations declared to have been made by him under torture.

And then we have another strange picture, *The Nativity*, painted at the end of the year 1500, Botticelli's last picture (now in the National Gallery, London); and this again refers to Savonarola, and to the state of things in Florence after his death. In an inscription written over it in Greek Botticelli explains its meaning thus:—

"This picture I, Alessandro, painted at the end of the year 1500, in the troubles of Italy, in the half-time after the time, during the fulfilment of the Eleventh of St John, in the second woe of the Apocalypse, in the loosing of the devil for three years and a half. Afterwards he shall be chained, according to the Twelfth of St John, and we shall see him trodden down as in this picture."

In the centre is the usual group of the Nativity, while right and left kneel the Magi and the Shepherds with angels pointing out to them the miracle. On the pent house roof and

in the sky angels sing the Gloria in Excelsis, and dance hand in hand swinging olive boughs and crowns in their joy. In the foreground devils crawl away to hide in the rocks, while rejoicing angels fall on the necks of Savonarola and his two companions, "the witnesses slain for the word of their testimony." The picture not only shows how deeply rooted was the memory of Savonarola in Botticelli's mind, but also it and its inscription testify to what was the condition of crime and vice which ran riot in Florence in these years, when Cambi tells us that "citizens who sought redress in the law courts were frequently stabbed in the street the next night, judges pronounced iniquitous sentences, and there was no reverence for holy things or fear of shame."

After this date Botticelli became too infirm to paint; he died in 1510, at the age of sixty-four, and was buried in his father's vault in his parish church of Ognissanti.[1]

Perugino.

Although Perugino belongs to Perugia he painted for so many years in Florence, where all his best work was done, that he is always classed with the Tuscan school. When he died in 1524 he was almost the last[2] of that great school which had given to Painting its re-birth and had led the way in that art for over two hundred years; Ruskin considers Perugino the culminating point of the Tuscan school of painting.

Having spent three years in Florence as the

[1] Botticelli was buried with extreme secrecy (probably because he was a noted partisan of Savonarola), and his tomb still remains without any tombstone.

[2] Lorenzo di Credi and Andrea del Sarto were the only two first-class painters of the Tuscan school who survived him; Andrea del Sarto by seven years, and Lorenzo di Credi by thirteen years.

pupil of Verrocchio (1479 - 1482), and having executed various works there in the years 1486-1491, Perugino in 1492 set up his studio in that city. Ruskin says:—"It is from this time that we date the great series of pictures in which he seems to carry to their deepest depths the expression of devotion, of self-sacrifice, and of holy grief." Perugino painted regularly in Florence from 1492 to 1498, and again during the greater part of the years 1501 to 1510, after which date he did little notable work. So that all his best work was done during this period of the Interregnum. As all know, he was Raphael's master; and he survived his great pupil by four years.

Perugino has four chief characteristics. First, free open space; regarding which Mr Bernhardt Berenson says:—"Space composition . . . is not an arrangement to be judged as extending only laterally, or up and down, on a flat surface, but as extending inward in depth as well. It is composition in three dimensions, and not in two; in the cube and not merely on the surface." In this "space composition" Perugino excelled all either before or after him; by regular gradations his distances recede far into the background, giving a feeling of vast and limitless space.

Second, aloofness in his figures. Dr Williamson says:—"They stand apart from one another, connected by a thread of thought with each other, and with the central feature of the picture, but each of them in every other way self-contained."

Third, his beautiful landscapes, "with distant hills bathed in a blue mist revealing long stretches of fertile land on either side, with single trees

silhouetted against the sky, and all bathed in pale golden sunlight."

Fourth, a severe absence of strong action or excited emotion. "Convulsive action was as much an offence to him as was its absence in his works an offence to Michelangelo."

The joint effect of these four characteristics is to produce pictures breathing a wonderful peace. Regarding *The Entombment*, now in the Pitti Gallery, Dr Williamson says[1]:—

"In this picture space composition is seen in its full vigour. How vast is the space in which the episode is placed, and how wonderful the sense of immeasurable distance produced. How quiet is the atmosphere of the scene; how reverent and tender a mood it creates. The picture is one of the best Perugino ever painted. . . . Each figure is distinct, self-centred, and enfolded in its own grief. . . . It is a picture full of sentiment, yet sober and thoughtful."

And regarding his *Baptism of Christ*, now at Rouen, the same writer says:—

"Around the two central figures are kneeling angels and attendant figures, eight only in number, carefully graduated in size according to position, aloof, serious, and still. Away and away beyond is the rolling landscape with its exquisite hills, and dainty detached trees standing out clear against the sky. On and on the eye travels seeking to reach the limits of this limitless vision, and impressed more and more by the skill that painted in so tiny a compass so vast a scene."

Of Perugino's masterpiece, his fresco of *The Crucifixion*, painted in the chapter-house of the

[1] *Perugino*, by G. C. Williamson.

convent of Sta. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi in Florence, it has been very generally felt that it is the most perfect representation of the Crucifixion ever achieved by any painter; while the whole picture breathes an indescribable spirit of *peace*.

Interregnum. 1498-1511.

After Savonarola's death Florence became more than ever a prey to anarchy. Three different factions, the Ottimati, the Bigi, and the Frateschi contended unceasingly, and frequent changes in the constitution only produced increased strife. At length after three years of turmoil the citizens were driven to a measure which stultified all their action in abolishing the rule of the Medici. They resolved that the only remedy for the evils of the city was the appointment of a Gonfaloniere for life, as a sort of permanent Dictator. There were various candidates, but, as might have been expected under the conditions which prevailed, instead of a strong man being elected the majority of the votes were given to a weak one whom no party had any reason to fear. Piero Soderini, a well-meaning and generally respected man with no strength or ability, was elected; and he remained permanently Gonfaloniere during the rest of the period of the Interregnum; though owing to his weakness and incapacity this brought little amelioration of the evils under which Florence groaned. The legal tribunals were utterly corrupt; crime of every kind was rife; men of ability kept aloof from public affairs; the Great Council refused

to vote money necessary to meet the financial engagements of the State; disputes and riots were incessant; and all writers give deplorable accounts of the condition of the city. Cambi says:—"Justice no longer existed among the citizens through fear of each other"; and Guicciardini remarks:—"It is difficult to imagine a city so thoroughly shattered and ill-regulated as ours was at this time." This condition of things in Florence naturally caused her to sink into a position of insignificance among the states of Italy; her foreign affairs were unceasingly mismanaged, being in the hands of men who were without any talents for such a task.

Contemporary historical events. 1498-1508.

Yet it was a time when a capable direction of foreign affairs was above all necessary. After Charles VIII.'s expedition Pope Alexander VI. brought about a league between Rome, Venice, Milan, the Emperor Maximilian, and Henry VII. of England, against France, a league which threatened the very existence of the French monarchy, and of those states, such as Ferrara, Florence, and Bologna, which clung to the French alliance. Louis XII., on succeeding to the French throne in 1498, set himself to break up this league; and the campaigns which during the next fourteen years he carried on in succession against Milan, Naples, Venice, and the Pope, kept Italy in a state of permanent warfare and threw all states there into confusion.

In 1499 Louis XII. sent against Milan an army which drove out Il Moro, who fled to

Innsbruck, to the protection of the Emperor Maximilian. The latter in this year married his eldest son, the Archduke Philip, to Joanna, the eldest daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, a marriage which had important consequences in the next generation. In the same year Florence put to death the only man she possessed who had the talents of a general, Paolo Vitelli. The Republic had sent him with a force to retake Pisa (which Charles VIII. had never restored), but the attempt failed, and Vitelli was accused of treachery, recalled, and executed, though it is stated by Guicciardini that he was innocent.

In 1500 Il Moro regained Milan, but was soon afterwards captured by the French, and carried off to France, where he was imprisoned in the castle of Loches for the remaining eight years of his life, Louis XII. taking possession of Milan. In the same year the combined forces of Spain and France conquered Naples; but this was followed by a dispute over its possession which brought on a three years' war between them. Nor did central Italy fare any better than the north and south. In the endeavour to establish a sovereignty of central Italy, Cæsar Borgia was seizing state after state, thus gaining in succession Imola, Forlì, Urbino, Faenza, Pesaro, Rimini, and Piombino, and making himself the terror of Romagna.

In 1501 Cæsar Borgia, having gained Faenza by causing its ruler, the young Astorre Manfredi, to be murdered, advanced into the Val d'Arno and threatened Florence. The Signoria ignominiously bought him off by agreeing to appoint him

Captain General of Florence's forces at a fixed salary of 36,000 florins a year. In the same year Alexander VI., in order to detach Ferrara from the French King, succeeded in bringing about a marriage between his daughter, Lucrezia Borgia, and Alfonso, the eldest son of the Duke of Ferrara.

In 1502 Cæsar Borgia, who as the result of various crimes had now become "Duke of Valentino, Duke of Urbino, Duke of Romagna, Prince of Andria, and Lord of Piombino," informed Florence that her government did not please him, and that she had better amend it. The Signoria, relying on Louis XII.'s approaching return to Italy, ordered its envoys to temporise; and other events called off Cæsar Borgia for a time from attacking Florence. He, however, informed her government significantly that the French King would not be always in Italy.

In 1503 Louis XII. advanced again into Italy to prosecute his war with Spain for the possession of Naples, but the campaign turned out adversely for the French. This would undoubtedly have brought Cæsar Borgia again upon Florence, but just at this juncture Pope Alexander VI. suddenly died, Cæsar Borgia being at the same time taken dangerously ill.[1] Cæsar Borgia after some time recovered, but only to find all his power broken through the death of the Pope. The various states which he had usurped at once reverted to their original rulers, and Cæsar Borgia was eventually arrested by the commander of the Spanish forces

[1] Alexander VI.'s death, believed at the time to be due to poison, is now considered to have been due to natural causes.

in southern Italy, Gonsalvo, and sent as a prisoner to Spain, where four years later he was killed while fighting for the King of Navarre.

In December 1503 the French army in southern Italy sustained a crushing defeat at a battle which took place on the river Garigliano; it managed to retreat in great disorder to Gaeta, but was there forced to capitulate, and to agree to return to France.[1] This brought the three years' war in southern Italy between France and Spain to an end, and Naples and Sicily were annexed by Ferdinand of Spain to the Spanish Crown and placed in charge of a Viceroy. It was in the above battle that Pietro the Unfortunate lost his life; whereby his next brother, Cardinal Giovanni, became head of the Medici family.

Pope Alexander VI. was succeeded by Pius III., but he died one month later, and was succeeded by Julius II. (Giuliano della Rovere), the celebrated fighting Pope, the destroyer of the old St Peter's, the founder of the new St Peter's, and the friend, and antagonist, of Michelangelo. A strong character, with many good points, he was fonder of war than of anything else, and was perpetually in the field, commanding his forces in person. Italy had now become the battlefield on which France, Spain, and Germany fought perpetually for supremacy, and this strong fiery old man[2] seized with avidity the opportunity this state of things gave him to indulge his predilection for war.

[1] Part of the army was sent back to France by sea, and part by land.

[2] His portrait by Raphael hangs in the Uffizi Gallery, and is thoroughly characteristic. There is a replica of it also in the Pitti Gallery, and another in the National Gallery, London.

From 1503 to 1507 Julius II. was chiefly occupied in subduing in succession the various states of Romagna, and forming them into "the States of the Church," which he now founded, and which thenceforward remained permanently the temporal dominion of the Papacy. In 1508 he turned his arms against Venice, and formed the "League of Cambray," a league entered into by Louis XII., the Emperor Maximilian, Ferdinand of Spain, and himself, to crush the power of Venice, and for the partition of her inland dominions.

Meanwhile the fortunes of the Medici family were beginning to emerge from the gloom in which for ten years they had been plunged. On Julius II. becoming Pope in 1503, and Giovanni (a man whose good-natured and peaceable disposition had always been contrasted with that of his elder brother) becoming in the same year the head of the family, many who had before looked on the Medici with disfavour became ready to help them, including Pope Julius himself. Nor was the same effect unfelt even in Florence. It was Pietro and his wife who were so specially obnoxious to the Florentines, not the Medici family as a whole. And as time went on and the effects of the misrule in Florence became more and more intolerable, the number of the citizens who secretly desired the return of this family, now that it was represented by two such characters as Giovanni and his brother Giuliano, grew constantly greater; though none dared to acknowledge this desire owing to the law which made it death to urge the return of the Medici.

The Medici. 1503-1511.

Giovanni's behaviour and manner of life in Rome was such as to encourage these sentiments. He showed no disposition to interfere in the affairs of the Florentines, though under the incapable rule of Pietro Soderini they continued in their chronic state of discord and anarchy. He lived plainly, having in fact but little means for ostentation, and often finding it hard to keep out of debt; never desponding, always cheerful, animated, and agreeable in his manners to all, and taking great interest in all matters connected with Art and Literature, though he had little money himself to spend upon such things.[1] By this course of conduct, and by the qualities of his character (which made friends where Pietro only made enemies), Giovanni gradually retrieved the downfall of his family, creating a feeling in their favour both outside and inside Florence which led a few years later to their being re-installed in power there.

The whole family, including Pietro's widow Alfonsina with her two children, Lorenzo and Clarice, were now living at Rome. And in the year 1508 Alfonsina managed to arrange at Rome a marriage between Clarice, now fifteen, and Filippo Strozzi, the head of the most wealthy and important Florentine family next to the Medici. For thus daring to marry "the daughter

[1] It was at this time that Giovanni formed the great friendship of his life, that with Galeotto della Rovere, nephew of Julius II. Giovanni was devotedly fond of him, and when after a year or two Galeotto died, was for long inconsolable; and in after years as Pope he never heard the name of Galeotto mentioned without showing his affectionate remembrance.

of a declared rebel and outlaw" Filippo Strozzi was summoned before the Signoria of Florence, heavily fined, and banished for three years; but the sentence was a half-hearted one, as we find him back in Florence in little more than a year afterwards.

Contemporary historical events. 1509-1511.

In 1509, as the result of the League of Cambray, there took place the decisive battle of Agnadello, at which Venice received from the allies a crushing blow, from which she never recovered. Her power had been steadily declining since 1453, and was by this defeat completely broken; and as a consequence she lost Verona, Padua, Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, and Piacenza, and became no longer of importance in European politics. In the same year Florence, after a long siege, recovered Pisa, which had been lost to her for fifteen years. In this year Henry VII. of England died, and was succeeded by his son Henry VIII., then eighteen. The latter in the same year married Katharine of Arragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and younger sister of Joanna of Spain.

In 1510 Julius II. changed sides, and allied himself with Spain and Venice against the French, endeavouring to expel the latter from Italy. This brought him into collision with Ferrara and Florence. He first led a successful attack against Mirandola, and then advanced against Ferrara, but was defeated. Meanwhile Louis XII. retorted by proposing a Council to depose the Pope, and demanded from his ally,

Florence, that she should allow it to assemble at Pisa. Florence was placed in a dilemma; if she consented she dreaded the Pope's enmity; if she refused she would offend Louis XII., and lose the protection of the French alliance. Soderini's government was quite incapable of dealing with such a problem, and by vacillation and endeavours to trim between the two opponents contrived to offend both. Florence agreed to the assembly of the Council at Pisa, but refused to permit a French force to enter Pisa to protect the Council, and did not send Louis XII. the troops she had promised. Julius II. now determined to put an end to the inefficient government in Florence, and to reinstate the Medici, and only waited until he should first have driven the French out of Italy, as by means of the Spanish alliance he hoped soon to do. In the meantime he appointed Giovanni his representative with the force of Papal and Spanish troops which was then besieging Bologna.

Art. 1494-1512. This period of the Interregnum, when war and its miseries raged over Italy, and confusion and anarchy were rampant in Florence, is nevertheless the time when Art reached its culminating point. It was as though men, seeking an antidote to the violence and turmoil around them, turned to the pictures of the great masters of the time which breathed an atmosphere of peace and rest not to be found elsewhere. The zenith of the Art of the Renaissance falls between these years, 1494 and 1512, during which period *The Last Supper*, by Leonardo da Vinci,

the frescoes on the roof of the Sixtine chapel by Michelangelo, and the frescoes of the Camera della Segnatura by Raphael, were painted, works in which Art reached its highest development.

There now succeeds a great army of painters, all of the first rank, and all practically contemporaneous, in whose hands Art, so long associated almost entirely with Florence, soared forth over all Italy. To mention only the names of the chief of those who all flourished at this epoch is to call up before the mind's eye a mass of Art creations such as no other period has produced. The following were all painting at this period, besides many others of less note:—

Botticelli (Florence).	Francia (Bologna).
Leonardo da Vinci (Florence).	Pinturicchio (Perugia).
Filippino Lippi (Florence).	Luini (Milan).
Lorenzo di Credi (Florence).	Raphael (Urbino).
Fra Bartolommeo (Florence).	Carpaccio (Venice).
Michelangelo (Florence).	Giorgione (Venice).
Andrea del Sarto (Florence).	Titian (Venice).
Perugino (Perugia).	Palma Vecchio (Venice).

In the year 1505 there were all working in Florence at one time Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Fra Bartolommeo, and Lorenzo di Credi. One may safely say that never on any other occasion were six such painters collected together at one time and place. Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo[1] were at work on their cartoons for the great hall of the Palazzo della Signoria; Perugino was engaged on his *Assumption*

[1] Michelangelo's statue of *David* had been finished the previous year. Perugino and Lorenzo di Credi were called upon to advise as to where it should be placed.

in the church of the Annunziata; and Raphael was painting his *Madonna del Gran Duca* (Pitti), his *Madonna del Cardellino* (Uffizi), and his fresco of *The Last Supper*, in the monastery of San Onofrio, which bears his signature and the date 1505.[1] Botticelli was at this time sixty-one, Perugino fifty-nine, Leonardo da Vinci fifty-three, Michelangelo thirty, and Raphael twenty-two.

Leonardo da Vinci was sent by Lorenzo the Magnificent to Il Moro, as the best among the Florentine painters whom he could recommend to him, in 1487. He remained with Il Moro for twelve years, during which time he founded the Milanese school of painting. He returned to Florence from 1503 to 1506, after which his principal home was Milan until 1516, when, at the earnest invitation of Francis I., who was anxious to inaugurate the patronage of Art in France, he removed to that country, and died there in 1519, at the age of sixty-seven.

Raphael entered the school of Perugino at Perugia in the year 1500 at the age of seventeen. He came thence to Florence in 1504, being then twenty-one, and painted there for four years. He was summoned by Pope Julius II. to Rome in 1508, and worked there under that Pope and his successor, Leo X., for the remaining twelve years of his life, dying at Rome in 1520 at the age of thirty-seven.

Michelangelo, whose earliest impulses towards Art had been fostered and directed by Lorenzo the Magnificent (whom throughout his life he

[1] It is disputed whether Raphael painted the whole of the fresco, or only the portion signed by him.

never forgot), went to Rome for the first time in 1496. He worked there till 1500, when he returned to Florence, and remained there until 1506, when he was summoned by the Pope to Rome to design an immense tomb, larger and grander than that of any other Pope, which Julius II. desired to have constructed for himself; and in 1508 he was given the difficult task of painting the frescoes on the roof of the Sixtine chapel.

But to Michelangelo, grand as was his genius, has been traced the downfall of Art which about two decades later commenced, and which was fully developed long before his death in 1564. Ruskin, carefully tracing out the cause of this downfall, says[1] that so long as artists employed their artistic powers to depict their subject, Art continued to advance, but as soon as they reversed the process and employed their subject to display their artistic powers, Art's downfall began; and that this disastrous change was made by Michelangelo, who practised the latter method throughout his life, whose unrivalled powers led all to follow him, and who, by adopting a principle alien to the true spirit of Art, was the author of its downfall.

It would seem that there was in Michelangelo a false idealism which was ready to distort to any extent the character of his subject in order to produce a result which would glorify his powers of execution. This first showed itself in his *Bacchus* (executed at Rome in 1496, and now in the Bargello Museum), which statue Shelley, while

[1] *Modern Painters*, vol. iii.

fully appreciating the great powers of execution that it displayed, declared to be "a most revolting mistake of the whole spirit of Bacchus." It showed itself still more in his *David* (1503), which, astonishing as it is in execution, is false to the true spirit of Art, in that in order to display the powers of the sculptor it falsifies the character of the subject, which might just as well be that of a young Samson or Hercules. The same thing is no less apparent in his *Moses* and in his statue of *Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino.* In each case the subject is treated as of no importance, and distorted out of all resemblance to its character, in order to form a vehicle for the display of certain powers in the sculptor. There is not one of Michelangelo's statues in looking at which we are not forced by the artist to think, not of the man depicted, but of Michelangelo. It is no wonder, therefore, in view of Michelangelo's long life and the leadership which his surpassing genius and the death of all the contemporaries of his earlier years gave to him, that Ruskin, after prolonged study of the subject, should have traced to him that downfall in Art which, not long after Raphael's death, set in. And if any one should desire to see how great that downfall was, he has but to walk in Florence from Or San Michele, which Donatello's statue of *St George* adorns, to the Piazza San Lorenzo, where Baccio Bandinelli's hideous statue of *Giovanni delle Bande Nere* (executed in 1540) is an eyesore to the whole locality, or into the Piazza della Signoria, where the same artist's no less hideous statue of *Hercules slaying Cacus* (executed

in 1534) disfigures the front of the Palazzo Vecchio.[1]

Before quitting the subject of Art's zenith and downfall, the part which Pope Julius II. played in connection with the former must not be omitted. For in the intervals of war Julius II., following the Florentine school of thought in philosophy and religion, formulated a scheme which is set forth in the two final achievements attained by the art of painting, Michelangelo's frescoes on the roof of the Sixtine chapel, and Raphael's frescoes on the walls of the Camera della Segnatura, both works being in the Vatican and both executed for Julius II. These works, by two masters who differ so greatly, have yet underlying them a fundamental idea common to both, which, in view of the place and the circumstances, can only have been furnished by the Pope himself. The Florentine school of thought, under the leadership of Cosimo, Lorenzo, Ficino, and Pico della Mirandola, had endeavoured to amalgamate Platonism and Christianity. Julius II., surrounded by men trained in that school, went a step further, and in the paintings which he caused to be executed by Michelangelo and Raphael in the Vatican propounded that both the Jewish dispensation and the Greek philosophy were "ante-chambers through which the human race was shepherded to Christ."[2] We see this idea first introduced in the frescoes on the roof of the Sixtine chapel, wherein Michel-

[1] The block of marble from which this statue was carved on its way to Bandinelli's workshop fell into the Arno. When the statue was set up the Florentine wits of the day declared that the marble had tried to drown itself to avoid the disgrace which was in store for it.

[2] *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. ii. chap. i.

angelo demonstrates it by showing the human race led to Christ through a long line of Pagan Sibyls and Jewish prophets.[1] And we see the same idea elaborated with a still greater wealth of thought in Raphael's frescoes round the Pope's principal official room, the Camera della Segnatura, the first work executed by Raphael on reaching Rome in 1508, frescoes of which the general scheme must have been supplied by the Pope, though the wonderful way in which it is worked out is Raphael's own great achievement.

In the four world-renowned pictures which cover the four walls of this room Raphael (on the text given him by the Pope) preaches his great sermon; and in pictures in which the celebrated scientists, philosophers, and poets of pre-Christian times appear together with those of the Christian epoch, teaches the lesson that the human soul is to aspire towards God *in each of its faculties*; in the exercise of reason and scientific research (*The School of Athens*); in the exercise of the artistic and æsthetic faculty (*Parnassus*); in the exercise of the faculty of order and good government (*Secular and Ecclesiastical Laws*); and lastly in the exercise of the more definitely religious faculty (*Theology*, the science about God). In these pictures, therefore, two lessons are combined; first, that the pre-Christian philosophers and scientists showed in their degree aspirations towards God, and helped

[1] The learned writer of chap. i. vol. ii. of *The Cambridge Modern History*, the late Dr Kraus, is firmly of opinion that the fundamental idea underlying this general scheme is to be attributed to none other than Pope Julius II. himself. At the same time it was, of course, not entirely original, the same idea having been propounded in different forms by Clement, Origen, John Scotus, Dante, and St Thomas Aquinas and specially dwelt upon by Pico della Mirandola.

to prepare the human race for Christianity; and second, that in man's aspirations towards God his highest intellectual faculties are not to be excluded, but that all his faculties are to be included, and consecrated to God.

The thoughts thus expressed show the standpoint which had at length been reached after nearly eighty years' discussion of these subjects by the thinkers of Florence. We are reminded of Pico della Mirandola's speech long before, "Philosophy seeks truth, theology finds it, religion possesses it." How much of the "sermon" belongs to Julius II., and how much to the great artist Raphael, we can never know. But we could have no grander example of the way in which Art is a language and has deep thoughts to speak to all who will listen to its words.[1]

But there was one event at this time in the world of Art, inseparably connected with Pope Julius II., which by no means redounded to his glory or that of any of those concerned in it. Urged on by Bramante and Michelangelo, he committed the enormous Vandalism of pulling down the old St Peter's (rich with a thousand years' historical associations), because it would not hold the huge and tasteless tomb which he had ordered,[2] and erecting instead the present St Peter's. Regarding this act and the motives which caused it, Ranke remarks as follows[3]:—

[1] Chap. v. p. 147.

[2] He intended that it should occupy the apse of the new St Peter's, when it would have dominated the whole interior of the church. After all, however, the tomb never got into St Peter's at all, while it hung like a millstone round Michelangelo's neck for about forty years. Only one side of it was ever completed, and this portion (containing the celebrated statue of *Moses*) was deposited in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli, where it still remains.

[3] Ranke's *History of the Popes.*

"Was it not profoundly significant that a Pope should himself resolve to demolish the ancient basilica of St Peter's, the great metropolitan Church, every part of which was hallowed, every portion crowded with monuments that had received the veneration of ages, and determine to erect a temple, planned after those of antiquity, on its site? Both the factions then dividing the jealous world of Art urged Julius II. to this enterprise. Michelangelo desired a fitting receptacle for the enormous monument of the Pope which he proposed to complete on a vast scale, and with that lofty grandeur which he has exhibited in his *Moses*. Yet more pressing was Bramante, whose ambition it was to execute that bold project of raising high in the air, on colossal pillars, an exact copy of the Pantheon in all the majesty of its proportions. Many cardinals remonstrated, and it would even appear that there was a general opposition to the plan; so much of personal affection attaches itself to every old church, how much more then to this, the chief sanctuary of Christendom. As Panvinius wrote: 'He had men of almost all classes against him, and especially the cardinals; not because they did not wish to have a new basilica erected with all possible magnificence, but because they grieved that the old one should be pulled down, revered as it was by the whole world, ennobled by the sepulchres of so many saints, and illustrious for so many great things that had been done in it.' But Julius was not accustomed to regard contradictions; without further consideration he caused one half of the old church to be demolished, and himself laid the foundation stone of the new one."

The year 1512 opened with a new series of military operations. France, Ferrara, and Florence on one side were against the Pope, Spain, and Venice on the other. The French army was commanded by the brave and capable young general, Gaston de Foix, cousin of Louis XII., and only twenty-four years of age. The Spanish forces were commanded by Raimondo da Cardona, Viceroy of Naples, and the Papal troops were placed by Julius II. under Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici; and as to rise in favour with Julius II. one had to be above all things a soldier, Giovanni could not refuse, though he evidently had no talents in that direction. After several brilliant successes had been gained by the French under the able leadership of Gaston de Foix, a pitched battle was fought on the 6th April 1512 at Ravenna, in which the Papal and Spanish army was totally defeated by the French, who, however, sustained a serious loss, for at the moment of victory their brave young commander, Gaston de Foix, was killed.[1] This battle was one of the bloodiest on record; and while the commander on the French side was killed, Cardinal Giovanni, the Pope's representative, was taken prisoner by the French, and sent, a captive, to Milan.

Interregnum. 1512.

Pope Julius II. was not cowed by this reverse; he rapidly collected a fresh army, the loss of Gaston de Foix seemed to paralyse the French, the tide of victory turned, and within three months the French army was driven across the Alps. Then Julius II. turned his arms against Florence, and the troops of the "Holy League" which he

[1] A monument to his memory stands on the site of the battle.

had formed were sent against her, Julius II. being determined to put an end to the existing state of things in that city, and to visit Soderini in particular with his wrath for having allowed the assembly of the Council at Pisa. Cardona's army of Spanish troops was therefore ordered to advance into Tuscany, and Cardinal Giovanni having escaped from Milan, he, his brother, and his cousin, were sent with it, the Pope informing Florence that the terms he required from her were that she should dismiss the Gonfaloniere Soderini, pay a fine of 100,000 florins, and allow the Medici to return to Florence. These terms Soderini's government declined to accept, and sent an inefficient force, chiefly composed of Machiavelli's newly-organised militia, to oppose Cardona's army at Prato, about ten miles from Florence.

Cardona reached Prato on the 28th August, and summoned it to surrender, which being refused the attack was at once commenced, and after a feeble resistance the town was taken by assault on the 29th August. The terrible sack of Prato, which has become proverbial among such events on account of the atrocities committed by the inhuman Spanish troops, ensued. Mr Hyett says:—

"The horrors of the sack which followed are without a parallel in history. For twenty-one days no attempt seems to have been made by Cardona to control his savage, greedy, and licentious soldiery. Every building was pillaged. The defenceless inhabitants were chased from street to street, and slaughtered as soon as overtaken. Neither youth, age, nor sex, neither the sanctity of place nor office, were respected. . . . Mothers

threw their daughters into wells and jumped in after them, men cut their own throats, and girls flung themselves from balconies on to the paving-stones below to escape from violence and dishonour. It is said that 5,600 Pratans perished."[1]

A mediæval army was on such occasions absolutely uncontrollable, and it is a mistake to speak of Cardona as though he wielded a power over his troops of a kind similar to that possessed by a modern commander, and failed to exercise it. Discipline as we understand it scarcely existed in such armies at any time, and in the sack of a city not a vestige of it remained. From the moment that a town was taken by assault there was no longer an army, but only a horde of savage ruffians with arms in their hands, mad with passion, and ready in a moment to turn their weapons against those who for the time were but nominal commanders, should these latter attempt to interfere with their proceedings. The real cruelty was perpetrated by the weak and incapable governing body headed by Soderini in sending a totally insufficient force to Prato, not strong enough to meet Cardona's army with any chance of success, but just sufficient to make the result upon Prato which actually occurred a certainty; and this in the case of a town which had no voice in the matter of offering resistance to that army.

The Medici brothers were not present during the whole of these terrible doings at Prato; Giuliano was only there during the first two days, Giovanni for ten days longer. During this time they exerted themselves to do what they could

[1] *Florence*, by F. A. Hyett.

to protect the women and children, among other things getting a guard placed over the great church in which a large number of them had taken refuge. And Jovius states that "if the Cardinal de' Medici and his brother Giuliano had not, at the risk of their lives, opposed themselves to the fury of the conquerors, these enormities would have been carried to a still greater excess."

While these horrors were taking place at Prato, Florence was occupied in carrying out a rapid revolution. Immediately on the news being received that Prato had been taken and that these atrocities were being perpetrated there, a number of the citizens, justly attributing all that had occurred to Soderini's mismanagement, forced their way into his room, made him resign his office, and sent him under an escort to Siena; whence he fled to Castelnuovo, where, that town being under the Turks, he felt safe from Julius II., whose personal animosity against him for the matter of the Council he well knew. The remaining members of the Government hastily signified to Cardona their willingness to allow the Medici to return, and agreed to pay the fine which the Pope demanded; and on the 1st September 1512 the Medici once more entered Florence, after an exile of eighteen years.

Moreover, it was soon evident that the people were glad to get them back again, that it had only been the power of a dominant faction which had kept them out so long, and that the result of the misrule suffered under the government of the latter had sunk deep into the minds of the people. For had it been otherwise the re-establishment of the

family in Florence would not have been accompanied by the results which ensued. That they were greeted on their arrival with the old shouts of "*Palle! Palle!*" may not of itself show much. More significant, however, is the fact that the Spanish troops who had escorted them into the city were able within a month to be entirely dispensed with. And this notwithstanding that all laws passed since 1494 were repealed, that the Consiglio Maggiore established by Savonarola was abolished, and that the Government was remodelled on exactly the same lines as in the times of Lorenzo the Magnificent, although a law expressly forbidding this had been passed in 1495.[1] There was no demonstration whatever against these changes, and Professor Villari tells us that "after the Spaniards had left the new Government required no support from foreign troops."[2] Also the writings and conduct of Francesco Valori, Nerli, and Machiavelli fully corroborate the statement made by the latter that "even those who disapproved of the present constitutional changes, soon reconciled themselves to the return of the old order of things." From the above it is clear that although the Medici returned in accordance with terms imposed upon the city by Julius II., yet the people were well content to have it so. They were in fact sick to death of the misgovernment they had experienced for so many years, and ready to welcome a rule which had ever been associated with order, and security to life and property.

[1] Giovanni Ridolfi was appointed Gonfaloniere.
[2] Professor Villari's *Life and Times of Machiavelli*.

And the conduct of the Medici brothers, Giovanni and Giuliano, was worthy of the occasion. They followed the traditions of their house, and the example that had been set by Cosimo Pater Patriae and Piero il Gottoso. Their family had been made to suffer much, they themselves had had to endure for long years the harsh conditions attaching to the life of outcasts and wanderers, they returned to a family home which had been swept bare, all the invaluable collections of their ancestors which it had contained when they left it having been wantonly destroyed, or carried off. Nevertheless their father Lorenzo's speech of forty-six years before was not forgotten by his sons, and they showed that they knew how to conquer, by showing that they knew how to forgive. The vindictive policy which among the Florentines invariably accompanied the return to power of a banished faction was by the Medici entirely rejected. There were no executions, prohibitions, confiscations, or banishments, except in the case of Piero Soderini, who had been banished by the Florentines themselves before the Medici returned. And even he was afterwards befriended by Giovanni.[1]

In this manner did the Medici once more set up their rule in Florence; and all things seemed to augur well for its satisfactory continuance, especially as it was decided that that rule should be placed in the hands of Giuliano, both Giovanni and Giulio being anxious to depart to Rome, where the election of a new Pope was imminent.

[1] Soderini was afterwards, when Giovanni became Pope, given by him a home in Rome, and settled there permanently.

CHAPTER XII

GIULIANO (DUC DE NEMOURS) AND LORENZO (DUKE OF URBINO)

The Medici when they returned again after so many years to Florence were represented by the two brothers, Giovanni and Giuliano, and their first cousin, Giulio. They had been youths of eighteen, fifteen, and sixteen when driven out from their home; they returned as men of thirty-six, thirty-three, and thirty-four. During the intermediate years they had had many varied experiences, had seen much of life, had had many hard things to endure, and ample opportunities of realising how differently the world treats those who are in a position to grant favours and those who have to seek them. On one of the trio the effect of these experiences had been good, on the other two the reverse.

And the relative characters of these three young men are important in regard to subsequent events. The senior member of the trio, Giovanni, was an easy-going, pleasure-loving man, with a full measure of the ability customary in his family, but ever ready to avoid trouble; while the experiences through which he had passed had left him with few scruples as to the manner in which he attained his objects. With his brother Giuliano it was

otherwise; he had a thoroughly good disposition, and one which would not allow him to adopt unworthy methods. But it is with the third member of the trio that we are in this matter chiefly concerned. Giulio was full of energy, and endowed with extreme ability, second only to that of his uncle, Lorenzo the Magnificent, though the objects to which he throughout life devoted his powers were on so much lower a level as to make this less generally apparent. From their very boyhood he had attached himself closely to his cousin Giovanni, becoming his constant companion and adviser, and an agent ever ready to take all trouble off his shoulders; an arrangement which exactly suited Giovanni's ease-loving character.

These conditions were fraught with important consequences. For during the long years of exile Giulio's fertile brain had designed a course of action in regard to Florence, should they ever succeed in regaining power there, which would make an entire change in the traditional policy of the family. No more should there be any of that resting of the Medici power upon mere popularity, which had proved, Giulio considered, such a broken reed; but it should rest, if he could direct events, upon force pure and simple. But the force should be that of the steel hand in a velvet glove, and the despotism thus planned be made as little irksome as possible by the outward form of a republic being still maintained, at all events for a time. For Giulio's far-reaching schemes went further than this, and looked forward to a time when even the form of a republic might be abolished, a despotic monarchy of Tuscany set up, and a crown at length

be placed upon a Medici head. All this could, he considered, be brought about (or at all events set in train) if Giovanni would continue to be guided by him, and if only it could be managed that Giovanni should become Pope.

To this member of the trio such feelings as generosity, magnanimity, care for the people, readiness to give unselfish labour for the good of one's country, clemency towards enemies, and other similar motives of action, which had been so long inherent in all the men and women of this family that they had grown to be assumed as matters of course, were completely non-existent. Beneath a handsome exterior and a graceful manner he hid a cold-hearted disposition, a nature able to entertain only ignoble aims, and a character burdened with no scruples whatever.

But Giulio well knew that the younger of the Medici brothers, Giuliano, would absolutely oppose any such projects, and in the present relative position of the two brothers would be able to do so successfully. Therefore Giulio's plans must be kept for the present to himself. Let Giovanni, however, become Pope, and it should then be seen how differently Florence would be ruled; while it would be easy to provide for Giuliano elsewhere, and to place Florentine affairs in the hands of some more amenable agent.

Such were the plans laid during the years of exile by this base-born scion of the Medici, who, possessing all their ability but not a particle of their other qualities, and scheming to direct the family towards aims, and raise it by methods, which were the only ones he appreciated, became

its evil genius. And now the first step necessary to his schemes had been gained, and they were once more installed in power in Florence; and Giulio turned all his attention to the second step, that of getting Giovanni made Pope. The dim crown in the distance which Giulio had set before him as the family aim had advanced one step nearer than it was when they were homeless exiles without power or influence; but he little realised through how many vicissitudes the family were at length to gain that aim after he had passed away.

GIULIANO (Duc de Nemours)

Born 1479. *Ruled* 1512-1513. *Died* 1516.

Giuliano,[1] the third son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was thirty-three years of age when his family returned to the home from which they had been driven out when he was a boy of fifteen. During the earlier part of their period of exile he had taken refuge with the Duke and Duchess of Urbino, Guidobaldo Montefeltro and his talented wife, Elisabetta Gonzaga (the second greatest lady of the Renaissance[2]), both of whom were very fond of him. And during the years of exile he had shown himself possessed of both general capacity and military ability. On his family being reinstalled Giuliano was placed in charge of the rule of Florence, ruling, that is to say, in the same manner as Lorenzo the Magnificent had done, the ostensible Government being as heretofore

[1] Plate XXVIII. (*Frontispiece.*)
[2] Her sister-in-law, Isabella d'Este, was the first.

the Signoria. And as soon as the new Government had been established Giovanni (accompanied as always by Giulio, his *Fidus Achates*) departed to Rome.

This return after eighteen years' banishment (or rather the election of Giovanni to be Pope, which was almost simultaneous with it) marks the second turning-point in the history of the Medici. Up to this point, great as had been their rise, the position which they had attained was not higher than that of various other rulers of Italian states; now, however, their history enters on a new phase, one in which they were to be among the most important people in Europe, intermarrying with crowned heads, and taking a prominent part in great events of European history.

Giovanni's decision to place the rule of Florence in Giuliano's hands, rather than in those of Pietro's son Lorenzo (who was then twenty, and had returned with his two uncles), was a wise one. For Lorenzo's character was similar to that of his father Pietro and his mother Alfonsina; while to inaugurate again the kind of rule maintained by Lorenzo the Magnificent it was eminently necessary that the power should be in the hands of one who had a conciliatory disposition, and was in sympathy with the feelings of the Florentine people.

Giuliano was in every way calculated to fulfil these requirements. Born just after the conspiracy of the Pazzi, his father, Lorenzo the Magnificent, had given to him the name of the much-loved brother whose murder was so great a grief; and in disposition Giuliano was extraordinarily like

the uncle whose name he bore. All writers agree as to his admirable character. He had a generous and sympathetic nature and conciliatory manners, was opposed to bloodshed and violence, was highly accomplished, and a great lover of Literature and Art. At the courts of Urbino and Mantua, and wherever else he had wandered during the years of exile, the young Giuliano de' Medici had been a favourite at all social gatherings; and Castiglione gives us, in his *Il Cortigiano*, an attractive picture of him, describing him as the chivalrous champion of women. Another writer says:—"He was a thoughtful and religious man, of a peaceful and generous nature, revolting from the crimes in those days necessary to the success of worldly ambition." He has been justly called "one of the most attractive personalities the Italian Renaissance can claim to have produced." He showed himself at once, even in his outward actions, desirous of meeting Florentine views; he shaved off his beard[1] in accordance with the fashion among the Florentines (who regarded a beard as the badge of the foreigner), he wore the Florentine *lucco*, and, avoiding all ostentation, bore himself simply as an ordinary citizen.

But Giuliano's rule of Florence was of short duration. In February 1513 Julius II. died, and, as his successor, Giovanni de' Medici was elected Pope, and took the name of Leo X. Immediately upon this Giulio's schemes began to work. Giuliano's lenient rule must be replaced by one more adapted to the new Pope's views regarding

[1] His portrait (Plate XXVIII.) was evidently painted at a later date (*see* p. 395).

Florence; so he was made "Gonfaloniere of the Papal forces," an office which necessitated his residence in Rome, and the rule of Florence was made over to his less scrupulous nephew Lorenzo, who was ordered to conduct Florentine affairs in accordance with instructions given to him by the Pope.

Just before this change was made the plot occurred which blighted the political career of Machiavelli. He had been Secretary to Soderini's Government, but had signified his willingness to serve under the new *régime*. Two young men, Boscoli and Capponi, fired with ideas acquired by reading the ancient Roman authors, had concocted an ill-digested plot for the murder of Giuliano and his nephew Lorenzo. They had apparently no confederates, but one of them dropped in the street a paper which disclosed their plot and contained a number of names (presumably of men whom they thought likely to sympathise with them), amongst which Machiavelli's was one; and the finder took the paper to the Signoria. The latter caused Boscoli and Capponi to be executed; but of the rest, while a few were banished, the greater part were set at liberty, it being felt that the plot had no real sympathisers, but was simply a dream of two hare-brained young men. Machiavelli was one of those held to be entirely innocent, but the suspicion which had rested on him for a few days ruined his career, as he could get no further official employment; he retired to his country villa, and took to Literature.[1]

[1] Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) is generally completely misunderstood by popular writers. Professor Villari in his *Life of Machiavelli* has pointed out that *The Prince* was written with a very noble object, and has effectually refuted "the base assertion that it was written to curry favour with the Medici."

Giuliano on being relieved of the rule of Florence retired to Rome, a change which was not unacceptable to him. "He preferred the charms of private life, literature, and the society of learned men to ambition." And such society, having been driven from Florence by the anarchy of the previous eighteen years, had now gravitated to Rome, which under Julius II., and still more under Leo X., was becoming what Florence had once been, the centre of Art and Learning in Italy.

Contemporary historical events. 1513-1515.

In 1513 Louis XII. again advanced into Italy and attacked Milan, but was repulsed by the armies of Ferdinand and Maximilian, sustaining a decisive defeat at the battle of Novara.

In 1515 Louis XII. died (on the 1st January), and was succeeded by his distant cousin, Francis I.

Giuliano. 1515-1516.

Giuliano, loving a quiet and unostentatious style of life, was averse from the honours which his brother, Leo X., in the desire to aggrandise his family, now thrust upon him. He was made lord of Parma, Piacenza, and Modena, but he thwarted the design which Leo X. formed to make him Duke of Urbino by dispossessing its Duke, Francesco della Rovere, who in 1508 had succeeded his uncle, Guidobaldo Montefeltro. When this was proposed Giuliano absolutely refused, "because it would be an injustice to the rightful Duke"; and Leo X. had to defer his design to gain Urbino for his family until after Giuliano was dead.

Early in 1515 Giuliano was sent by the Pope as his representative to congratulate the new King of France, Francis I., on his accession. Francis developed a great liking for him, and while at the French court Giuliano was married to the charming Philiberte of Savoy, then seventeen years old, the "Anima Eletta" of Ariosto, the young aunt of Francis I., sister of his mother, Louise of Savoy. The French King at the same time created him Duc de Nemours, by which title he is always known, to distinguish him from his uncle Giuliano, the brother of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Soon after his return to Rome from France Giuliano accompanied Leo X. as commander of the Papal forces to the conference between the Pope and the King of France which was held at Bologna in December 1515; on which occasion there were great festivities in Florence, both on the way to Bologna and during their stay at Florence on their return. But in February 1516 Giuliano, being much out of health, removed to the Badia of Fiesole; and there, on the 17th March, he died at the age of thirty-seven, sincerely lamented by the Florentines, to whom he had greatly endeared himself. Thus the two Giulianos were, each in their respective generations, the best beloved of their family. To the very last Giuliano endeavoured to prevent his brother's design upon Urbino, and Alberi tells us that when Leo X. came to see Giuliano at Fiesole in his last illness, the latter begged him almost with his dying breath not to attack the Duke of Urbino. Philiberte of Savoy did not survive him many years; she only lived to the age of twenty-six, dying in 1524.

Giuliano was buried with great ceremony in San Lorenzo, in the New Sacristy then just begun by Michelangelo under the orders of Leo X., being the first member of the family to be interred there. And in after years over his tomb was erected one of the two great masterpieces of Michelangelo.[1] Giuliano left no child by Philiberte, but left an illegitimate son, Ippolito, born at Urbino in 1509.

The fine portrait of Giuliano by Raphael (Frontispiece) is particularly interesting because it has only recently come to light after being lost for three hundred and fifty years. The portrait of him in the Uffizi Gallery by Alessandro Allori (1535-1607) had always been said to be a copy of one known to have been painted by Raphael and mentioned by Vasari as having been seen by him; but since Vasari's time all trace of this portrait had disappeared. In 1901, however, a picture which had been bought by the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia some years before was brought to Paris by Prince Sciarra-Colonna for examination by the late M. Eugène Müntz, Director of the École des Beaux Arts, who after a careful inspection pronounced it to be undoubtedly the lost portrait by Raphael of Giuliano (Duc de Nemours). And this opinion has since been confirmed by that of Dr Wilhelm Bode, Director of the Royal Gallery of Berlin, and other experts. The picture differs from that by Alessandro Allori in having in the background a view, looking from the Vatican, of the castle of St Angelo, and showing the corridor leading from

[1] *See* pp. 399 and 479.

the Vatican to the castle. It was evidently painted in Rome in 1516, either just before, or more probably just after Giuliano's return from his embassy to France. He wears the style of cap in vogue there, the French style of dress, and a beard, as customary in that country. Over a scarlet vest, and a black doublet, he wears a cloak of greyish-green brocade bordered with fur, the left sleeve having on it a narrow strap with a gold ornament.[1] The document in his hand, and the folded paper stuck into his cap, refer to his diplomatic mission to Francis I.[2]

LORENZO (Duke of Urbino).

Born 1492. (*Ruled* 1513-1519.) *Died* 1519.

Lorenzo,[3] the only son of Pietro the Unfortunate, was two years old when the family were exiled, eleven years old when his father died, and sixteen when his sister Clarice was married in Rome to Filippo Strozzi. In consequence of his father's wandering life and early death he was brought up by his mother Alfonsina, and had imbibed from her all those ideas of pride and arrogance which were most repugnant to the Florentines. When he was twenty-one the rule of Florence was placed in his hands as the representative of his uncle, Leo X., the senior member of the family. He was ordered to rule in accordance with detailed instructions which were drawn up for his guidance by the Pope, and which specially

[1] A curious detail is that the top of the first finger of the left hand seems to have been cut off. The same detail occurs in Allori's picture.

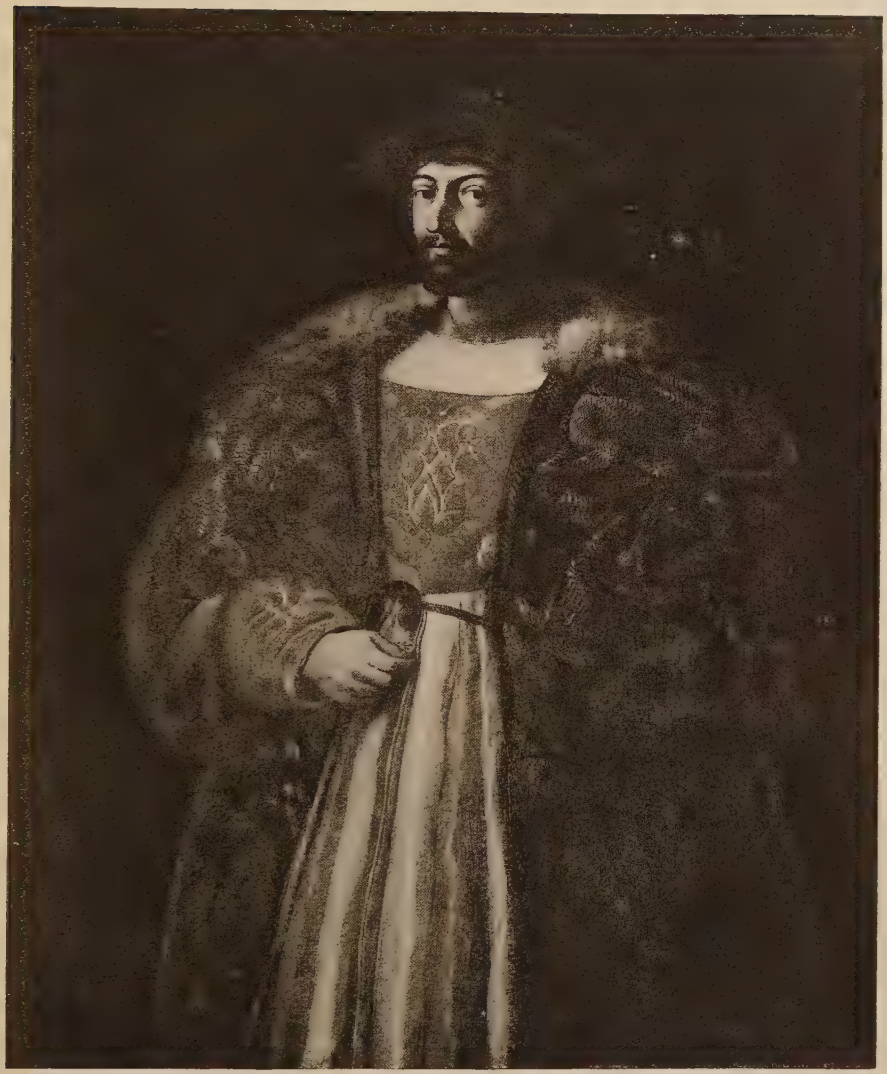
[2] This valuable picture is now the property of Herr Oscar Huldschinsky, Berlin, having been bought for the sum of £17,700.

[3] Plate XXIX.

warned him against offending the feelings of the Florentines by ostentation in his mode of life, or by any display of that arrogant demeanour to which he was inclined. Leo X. and his adviser Giulio were bent upon ruling Florence with a strong hand, but at the same time they had no desire to disturb the excellent relations between them and the people which had been established on their return to power. And for the first two or three years Lorenzo obeyed these wise instructions; though he had little capacity, he refrained from giving offence, and when in 1515 Leo X. visited Florence, the enthusiastic reception which the people gave him showed that the Medici rule was still popular.

In March 1516 Giuliano's death removed the obstacle to Leo X.'s design of seizing upon the Dukedom of Urbino and giving it to one of the members of his own family. The Papal forces were at once sent against Urbino, Lorenzo being put in command; the reigning Duke, Francesco della Rovere, was driven out; and on the 30th May the Papal army entered Urbino. Whereupon Leo X. declared Lorenzo Duke of Urbino (by which name he is always known); but he remained so in little more than name, and on Leo X.'s death five years later the rightful Duke recovered his state.

This new acquisition by the representative of the Medici family charged with the rule of Florence was of doubtful advantage to that state. Lorenzo had not the wit to be a Duke in Urbino and a simple citizen in Florence. He now disregarded the instructions he had received, and his



LORENZO (DUKE OF URBINO), SON OF PIETRO THE UNFORTUNATE.

Alinari] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

insolent bearing, his maintenance of a semi-ducal ceremonial, and his dissolute conduct, soon made him hated in Florence. Moreover, Lorenzo's new dignity involved Florence in a costly war; for Francesco della Rovere made strenuous endeavours to regain his inheritance, and Lorenzo, before his authority over Urbino was secured, had to undertake a campaign lasting many months.[1] All this embittered the Florentines; conspiracies to take his life were frequent, followed by executions which enraged the people still more against him; and matters were rapidly tending towards another revolution.

In 1518 Leo X. and his adviser Giulio (who had now become a cardinal) succeeded in arranging with Francis I. that Lorenzo should be married to the King's distant relative, the beautiful Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne. The contemporary historian Fleurange remarks that she was "trop belle que le mariè," referring to Lorenzo's dissolute life. Lorenzo went to France in great splendour, both to represent the Pope at the baptism of Francis's eldest son, as well as for his own marriage to the King's relative. He was accompanied by his brother-in-law, Filippo Strozzi, and other principal Florentines, "all dressed in crimson velvet and with a numerous retinue."[2] The court of Francis I. was at this time the most brilliant in Europe; it was now assembled at Amboise, and there, first the baptism of the heir to the throne took place, followed three days later by the marriage of

[1] During this campaign he was dangerously wounded in the head at the attack on the castle of Mondolfo.

[2] Cambi.

Lorenzo de' Medici and Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne. Fleurange, who was present, says that the festivities on the occasion of this marriage were on a more splendid scale than had ever before been witnessed in Christendom, and gives a long description of them. The young King Francis I. delighted in the most gorgeous pageants,[1] and no place was more suited to the display of sixteenth century magnificence than the splendid old feudal castle of Amboise. The festivities lasted a month, after which Lorenzo and his bride returned to Florence, where the Medici Palace must have seemed to Madeleine a somewhat sombre abode after the brilliance of Francis I.'s court. After this marriage Lorenzo added to his other misdemeanours in Florentine eyes by adopting the French custom of wearing a beard, a dire offence in Florence; and the portrait we have of him was evidently painted at this time.

Madeleine only lived for one year after her marriage. She died in the Medici Palace, on the 29th April 1519, a fortnight after giving birth to a daughter (Catherine). And six days later, on the 4th May, Lorenzo, worn out by a dissolute life, also died, at the age of twenty-seven, his death being to the advantage, not only of Florence, but also of the Medici family, to whose name he had brought nothing but discredit.

Lorenzo was buried, as his uncle Giuliano had been, in the New Sacristy of San Lorenzo;[2] and

[1] It was only two years after this that he arranged the sumptuous pageant which received the name of "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," at which he entertained Henry VIII.

[2] There is no record as to where Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne was buried.

Michelangelo received orders from Leo X. to design his monument. This in after years he carried out in the manner which has made this monument perhaps the most generally admired of all Michelangelo's works; and these two tombs in the New Sacristy over Giuliano (Duc de Nemours) and Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino) are probably the best known tombs of any in Europe.[1] Over each sarcophagus sits a statue of the man whose remains it contains; but these statues make no attempt to resemble the man depicted. To Giuliano,[2] who had a fine character, is given a statue representing quite the reverse; while to Lorenzo, the most worthless of the Medici, is given a statue [3] so grand that poet after poet has been inspired to write fine lines about it, attributing to the man the qualities represented by the statue.[4] When this result was foreseen, and it was pointed out to Michelangelo that the figures bore no faintest resemblance to the men represented, he contemptuously asked who would know it in the ages to follow.

The plans of Giulio de' Medici had been much disarranged by the results of Lorenzo's failure to

[1] In particular on account of the four allegorical figures reclining on the two sarcophagi (*see* chap. xvii. p. 479).

[2] Giuliano is represented wearing his uniform as Gonfaloniere of the Papal forces.

[3] That which has been called *Il Pensieroso*. It was for many years debated which of the two tombs was Giuliano's and which Lorenzo's, and writers before 1875 have taken opposite views; but in that year the question was set at rest by the opening of the sarcophagus over which this figure sits, the result of which showed it to be Lorenzo's (*see* chap. xviii. p. 511).

[4] Thus Rogers writes:—

"That is Duke Lorenzo; mark him well;
His mien most noble, most majestical."

While another writer considers Lorenzo's statue to denote a character showing "self-devoted absorption in noble designs."

follow the instructions laid down for him. On the latter's death, therefore, Leo X. sent Giulio with all speed to Florence to undo the harm to the family interests which Lorenzo had caused. He must have travelled with great despatch, for he arrived in time to superintend the arrangements for Lorenzo's funeral, which was carried out with much magnificence. Giulio then turned his attention to the matters on account of which he had been sent to Florence, and here for the first time gave public evidence of his great ability; for he was completely successful in his arduous task. The embittered feelings which the misgovernment of Lorenzo had called forth caused the political atmosphere to be one of seething discontent. The *Frateschi*, led by Jacopo Salviati, declared the existing method of government to be too oligarchical; the *Ottimati*, led by Piero Ridolfi, condemned it as being too republican; while outside these two parties were many turbulent spirits who merely aimed at anarchy. Giulio skilfully avoided identifying himself with either of the opposing parties, and yet contrived to please both of them, while at the same time keeping the real power in his own hands. And during the five months that he remained in Florence he lightened taxation, brought the finances into order, reformed the administration of justice, and restored to the elective bodies rights of which Lorenzo had deprived them. Nardi tells us that both his measures and his demeanour gave general satisfaction. This five months' work on Giulio's part was in its way a masterpiece in the art of government.

But Cardinal Giulio had other difficulties than

these to surmount. There were very intricate family politics also through which a way must be found if his cherished scheme was ever to bear fruit. By Lorenzo's having died leaving only a daughter who was a baby a week old, the position of the family as rulers of Florence had become very precarious, since Cosimo's branch threatened to become extinct.[1] Lorenzo had been the only son of Pietro the Unfortunate, and of his two uncles, Giuliano was dead, and Giovanni was Pope; while Giuliano's son, Ippolito (then ten years old), as well as Giulio himself, were both illegitimate. So that this little baby Catherine was the last legitimate representative of the elder branch. The succession to the headship of the family (and with it to the rule of Florence) would, therefore, on Leo X.'s death, by rights go to the younger branch, either in the person of Pier Francesco,[1] great-grandson of Cosimo's brother, Lorenzo, or in that of the latter's other great-grandson, Giovanni delle Bande Nere, who was now twenty-one years old, and already making a name for himself as a military commander. Not only, however, had the younger branch shown no aptitude for State affairs, but also that branch deserved no consideration from any of Cosimo's branch, seeing that they had been the chief cause of the exile of the family, had discarded the family name during the years of the interregnum, and had acted a mean and ignoble part all through. So that Leo X. and Giulio were determined to keep the rule of Florence out of their hands and in those of Cosimo's branch, if this should be in

[1] *See* Genealogical Table (Appendix I.).

any way practicable; nor were either of them likely to be at all scrupulous as to the methods by which this object might be effected.

But all this — by what schemes under such circumstances the power was to be kept in Cosimo's branch, what was to be done with this baby girl who had become the most important person in the future of the family, and how all was to be combined with that ultimate aim of which he never lost sight—furnished for Cardinal Giulio a problem the consideration of which occupied many more hours of those five months at Florence than even the difficulties of public affairs. Immediately after the splendid funeral in San Lorenzo he took up his abode in the Medici Palace, now tenanted by so small an owner. And we can well imagine the far-reaching dreams and complex projects for a distant future which filled the active brain of Giulio de' Medici as his deep, thoughtful eyes for the first time looked down in her cradle on this last frail scion of Cosimo's branch, a fragile bark to bear so weighty a freight.

CHAPTER XIII

GIOVANNI (LEO X.)

Born 1476. (*Pope* 1513-1521.) *Died* 1521.

Leo X. was by no means so important a character as it has been universally the fashion to depict him. The splendour which surrounded him has caught the popular imagination, and has prevented its being seen how little he merited the exalted view of him which has obtained general acceptance. When, however, he is brought to stand side by side with the other members of his family this inevitably comes out. The combined effect of his desire to take life easily and his unfailing common-sense (which kept him from involving himself in matters likely to lead to embarrassment and disaster) prevented him from becoming, as did his cousin Clement VII., the pivot round which the great events which took place in his time revolved. As a result, in a history of the Medici family (where each individual occupies the place demanded by his own character and deeds) the narrative of Leo's life becomes of far less importance than that of his much less pleasing cousin Clement, who not only played a more important part in the affairs of Europe, but also pursued a course which had infinitely greater effect on the subsequent fortunes of the family.

Giovanni, the second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was only thirty-seven when, on the 11th March 1513, he was elected Pope.[1] During the previous twenty years, from the time when at sixteen he had left his home in Florence to take his seat for the first time in the Sacred College, his life had been a chequered one. Returning to Florence after only a few months in Rome, he had during the two years that followed seen the rapidly increasing unpopularity of his family under his brother Pietro's unsympathetic rule, had been driven forth with him into exile, had spent five years in endeavours at various courts to obtain assistance for his brother in military enterprises against Florence which invariably failed, and then, departing from Italy for a time, had wandered through northern Europe, seeing many cities and the life of many lands. Returning at length to Rome, he had gradually won for himself and his family a position of favour with the Pope, had been sent by him on important missions, had been placed practically in command of a military force, had taken part in a severely-fought battle and been taken prisoner, had seen the terrible sack of Prato and done something to mitigate its horrors, and, finally, had re-entered his native city in triumph, and re-established his family in power there. All this had given him a wide experience of men and affairs, but it had not altered his ease-loving disposition.

Leo X. gave his name to his age, and his nine years'[2] reign as Pope has been extolled to the skies by the literary men of three centuries. His

[1] Elected Pope on the 11th March, he was ordained a priest on the 15th March, and a bishop on the 19th March.

[2] From 11th March 1513 to 1st December 1521.

character has in part been already noted. Apart from his love of Literature and Art, an unusually strong common-sense and a genial good-nature were his chief characteristics. Erasmus, who knew him well, praises his kindness and humanity, his magnanimity and learning, the charm of his manner, and his love of peace and the fine arts; and comparing his pontificate with that which had preceded it, says that "an age of iron was suddenly transformed into one of gold." And even Sarpi states:—

"Leo, noble by birth and culture, brought many aptitudes to the Papacy, especially a remarkable knowledge of classical literature, humanity, kindness, the greatest liberality, and an avowed intention of supporting artists and learned men, who for many years had enjoyed no such favour in the Holy See."

While Dr Kraus[1] says:—

"Paramount in Leo's character were his gentleness and cheerfulness, his indulgence both for himself and others, his love of peace and hatred of war. . . . But on his personal character the great blot must rest that he passed his life in intellectual self-indulgence, and took his pleasure in hunting and amusement while the Teutonic north was bursting the bonds of reverence and authority which bound Europe to Rome."

On becoming Pope, Leo at once actively began all that encouragement of Literature and Art for which his pontificate is famous, inviting learned men from all parts of Italy to Rome, making plans for founding a great university

[1] *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. ii. chap. i.

there for the study of the Greek and Latin authors, corresponding with Aldus Manutius and others about inaugurating a printing press at Rome, commencing research work to obtain lost manuscripts of the classical age,[1] planning schemes for important works to be executed by Raphael and other artists, and setting himself in every way to advance the cause of Learning and Art.

He also set about assuring the future of his family. He created as cardinals his two first cousins, Giulio de' Medici[2] and Luigi Rossi; also his nephews (each a son of one of his three married sisters), Innocenzio Cibò, Giovanni Salviati, and Niccolò Ridolfi. With five cardinals in the family there would be a good probability that one of them would succeed him as Pope. His schemes for securing to the family the Duchy of Urbino have already been noted.

In January 1515, Francis I., on succeeding to the French throne, began to make preparations for an expedition to recover Milan. Leo X. endeavoured to oppose this by means of an alliance between himself, Ferdinand of Spain, and the Emperor Maximilian.[3] But Francis gained the victory of Marignano and took Milan,[4] and Leo was forced to come to terms with him, which

[1] It was he who thus obtained the copy of the first five books of Livy, now in the Medici Library in San Lorenzo, Florence.

[2] Leo's creating Giulio a cardinal was entirely illegal, the latter being barred by the canons of the Church on account of the illegitimacy of his birth. The historian of Leo's life says:—"The Pope got over the difficulty by simply declaring him legitimate."

[3] It was in the hope of inducing Henry VIII. also to join this alliance that Leo X. created Wolsey a cardinal.

[4] Maximilian Sforza (the eldest son of Il Moro) was driven out, and Milan was placed under the government of Odet de Foix, Marechal de Lautrec.

were settled at a personal conference between them, held at Bologna in December 1515.[1] On his way to this conference Leo stayed three days in Florence, where a splendid reception was prepared for him. Landucci, who was present, states that the grandeur of this reception was beyond description, and that "no other city in the world would, or could, have done the like." The city was decorated in all directions with triumphal arches, imitations of buildings of the classic age, statues, and allegorical devices. In the Piazza della Signoria an octagonal temple was erected by Sangallo; over the unfinished façade of the Duomo the design for it made by Lorenzo the Magnificent himself was executed in wood by Sansovino and painted by Andrea del Sarto; a colossal Hercules for the Loggia de' Lanzi was sculptured by Baccio Bandinelli; various triumphal arches were erected by Montelupo, Rosso, and Granacci—one between the Badia and the Bargello, and another near the monastery of San Marco, being specially fine—and the city gave itself up to welcoming with numerous festivities the first Florentine who had ever sat on the Papal throne.

On his return journey from Bologna, Leo stayed at Florence for more than a month, remaining there till the 17th February 1516, and during this visit he made arrangements for completing the family church of San Lorenzo. He ordered Michelangelo to prepare a design for

[1] In Raphael's fresco in the Vatican of *The Coronation of Charlemagne*, commemorating this event, portraits of Leo X. (as Leo III.), of Francis I. (as Charlemagne), and of Giuliano's little son Ippolito (as a page) are all given.

the façade, and sent him to Carrara to obtain the necessary marble; and for this purpose no less than thirty-four shiploads of marble were subsequently despatched to Florence, though the façade remains to this day untouched. Leo also directed the construction by Michelangelo of the New Sacristy in San Lorenzo, which the Pope intended should form a mausoleum to contain six tombs, those of his father, Lorenzo, and uncle, Giuliano, as well as tombs for the other four members of the family who were then living, viz., himself, his brother Giuliano, his cousin Giulio, and his nephew Lorenzo. But only two of these six tombs were ever completed.

In 1516 Leo X., immediately upon his brother Giuliano's death, seized Urbino, as previously mentioned, in order to form a sovereignty for his nephew Lorenzo. The dissatisfaction caused by this procedure led, in the spring of 1517, to a remarkable episode. A serious conspiracy, headed by the young Cardinal of Siena, Alfonso Petrucci, was formed amongst the cardinals to poison the Pope. This being discovered, Petrucci, who had absented himself from Rome, was invited thither under a safe-conduct, as well as a solemn promise given by Leo to the Spanish ambassador that Petrucci's life would be spared; both of which promises were disregarded as soon as the latter reached Rome, where he was thrown into prison and condemned to death. Further examination proved that a large number of cardinals were implicated in the plot; and Petrucci, with his two chief assistants, a surgeon and a secretary, were cruelly tortured and put to death; the lives

of the other cardinals concerned were spared, but they were subjected to various deprivations. These punishments aroused so great disaffection among nearly all the remaining cardinals that the Pope had to be surrounded by guards even when celebrating Mass in St Peter's. To meet this alarming state of affairs, and finally put an end to this extraordinary episode, Leo X. took the bold and unprecedented step of creating in one day thirty-one new cardinals.

At this period just before the Reformation, the plurality of offices held by the higher clergy was scandalous; Roscoe states:—"It is actually and substantially true that the same person was frequently at the same time an archbishop in Germany, a bishop in France or England, an abbot or a prior in Poland or Spain, and a cardinal in Rome." The creation of so many additional cardinals, with the benefices given to them, of course increased this evil; and this large number of important Church offices held by permanent absentees, tending as it did to much corruption and maladministration in the dioceses thus deprived of their proper rulers, helped to increase the dissatisfaction with the Church which was steadily growing in northern Europe.

In 1518 Leo X. arranged with Francis I. the marriage already mentioned between his nephew Lorenzo and the King's relative Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne, this being the second matrimonial alliance with the royal family of France made by the Medici family.[1] When in the following

[1] The marriage of Giuliano with Philiberte of Savoy having been the first.

year Lorenzo died Leo sent his cousin Giulio to administer Florentine affairs for a time; the latter remained at Florence from May to October 1519, and on his return to Rome Cardinal Passerini was left in charge of Medicean interests in Florence on behalf of the Pope, and continued in charge for the next two years.

In 1521, Perugia being greatly misgoverned by its ruler, Gianpaolo Baglioni, described as "a monster of iniquity," Leo X. determined to put an end to the Baglioni rule there and to incorporate Perugia with the States of the Church. He seems to have considered that against such a criminal any treachery was admissible. Baglioni was invited to Rome under the pretext of consulting with him about political affairs, and given the Pope's safe-conduct; but on arrival was thrown into prison, subjected to torture, and beheaded in the castle of St Angelo, the Pope taking possession of Perugia.[1] About the same time a similarly treacherous endeavour was made to enlarge still further the States of the Church by seizing Ferrara; but the agents who had been bribed to open the gates on the approach of the Papal forces[2] revealed the plot to the Duke of Ferrara, and the attempt failed. Even Roscoe, with all his admiration for Leo X., remarks that these

[1] This action, abominable as it was, was not exceptional in that age. Mr Marion Crawford, in his *Sketches from Venetian History*, speaking generally of such cases, remarks that in that age a safe conduct seemed so invariably the prelude to a political assassination that the extraordinary thing is that men should have continued to put any faith in such promises.

[2] A portion of these were commanded by the young Giovanni delle Bande Nere, Leo's distant relative belonging to the younger branch of the family (chap. xxiii.).

operations "disclose some of the darkest shades of his character."[1]

And they are to be attributed,[2] if not wholly, at all events to a very large extent, to that action which was the fundamental mistake of Leo X.'s life. For in order to satisfy his easy-going temperament, and indulge in those pursuits of Literature and Art, convivial pleasures, and luxurious enjoyment, for which alone he cared, Leo surrendered the whole conduct of the political affairs of the Papacy into the hands of his energetic and crafty cousin Giulio; with the consequences which were to be expected from the latter's unscrupulous character. Leo X. must of course bear the full responsibility for the acts which he permitted to be done in his name; but while this is so, the political acts of his pontificate are to be ascribed rather to Giulio than to Giovanni, and in looking at the latter's life and character this requires to be borne in mind. To him political and ecclesiastical affairs were a wearisome burden to be got rid of as much as possible, while as time went on he left them more and more in the hands that were so willing to undertake them, leaving him free to attend to those matters which to him were so much more congenial. It was indeed hard on such a nature that it should be his lot to have to deal with a movement like the Reformation, and be expected to divert his attention from the latest reproduction of some classical work brought out

[1] Roscoe's *Life of Leo X.*

[2] The personal character given to Leo by Erasmus, Sarpi, and so many other writers (including such an authority as Dr Kraus), could scarcely have been given if this was not the case.

by Aldo's printing press to give heed to the troublesome complaints of a Luther.

It is almost as much a relief to us as it must have been to Leo himself to turn from his political life to his action in regard to those matters which were his chief interest. Here we find another man altogether; and here there is neither apathy, boredom, surrender of his leadership to others, nor treacherous or underhand dealing. In that world of Literature and Art which his soul loved, and in his sympathy for all the culture of his time, he is worthy of that atmosphere of splendour which has gathered round his name. His great-grandfather Cosimo and his father Lorenzo had contrived both to conduct difficult political affairs and also to achieve mighty results in the domain of Literature and Art. Leo X. had none of the energy of his ancestors, while his abilities were cast in a smaller mould, so that he found one half of the matter as much as he could attend to; but in that half his achievements, though not to be compared to those of his father and great-grandfather, were considerable. Moreover, he had greater resources to draw upon. Art had advanced to its zenith; great stores of the classical literature had by this time been brought to light; printing had come to assist in their reproduction, instead of the slow and laborious process of hand copying; while great as had been the wealth which his ancestors had possessed to assist their efforts in this cause, Leo had the still greater resources of the Papacy.

To detail all that he did in the patronage of Literature and Art would fill a volume. The same

effect was produced at Rome as had taken place eighty years before at Florence, when his great-grandfather Cosimo became the leading man in that city. Scholars and artists flocked to Rome, where such a patron was to be found. Leo founded the university of Rome, to which he summoned a crowd of celebrated men, and which had eighty-eight professors as teachers of various branches of learning; and he did not rest until he had, with the assistance of Marcus Masurus and Aldus Manutius, established a press at Rome for printing the works of the Greek authors,[1] which, as they issued, were corrected by the celebrated Giovanni Lascaris himself, who had in his earlier years been employed in the researches of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and whom Leo now summoned to Rome to help him in this work. Ariosto speaks in glowing terms of the gifted company of poets and learned men whom Leo gathered round him. His own classical attainments were considerable, and he was justly acknowledged as a judge on all such matters. "He had a passion for all books and manuscripts, both in the dead and living languages, and these he devoured with avidity, remembering and quoting their contents out of an excellent memory."[2] Towards Art his patronage was unbounded, and great as was his renown, it has been held by many that his protection of, and affection for, Raphael (who died the year before him) "is, and always will be, Leo's best and noblest title to fame."

The above pursuits were combined with all

[1] There was already a printing press at Rome for works in the Latin character, but none hitherto for the Greek character.

[2] *The Medici Popes*, by H. M. Vaughan.

the amusements of an existence frankly given up to enjoying life as much as possible, and never showing from first to last any indication that a future life was to be expected. This latter is a strange trait under the circumstances, and one which had very important results. Lorenzo the Magnificent, for all his love of the Pagan classical literature, and whatever he may or may not have been in conduct, never displayed this trait; but in the son whom he had helped to become head of the Church, it is a marked feature, and various eminent writers have supported the opinion of Mosheim in designating Leo X. as an Atheist. Not that he was by any means wanting as regards the outward performance of his religious duties; for as to these he was most scrupulous. But both Europe in that age and Mahomedan countries in our own can show plenty of examples that the scrupulous performance of such duties is compatible with entire unbelief.

So far as one can judge (on so essentially private a matter) from a man's outward conduct and expressed opinions, Leo was a simple epicurean Pagan. He was not a coarse voluptuary, but his speech on becoming Pope frankly displayed his mind:—"Since God has given us the Papacy, let us enjoy it." And he did. Hunting and hawking parties in the Campagna, pleasant gatherings at his villa of La Magliana, convivial supper parties at Rome, the delights of literature, poetry, music, and theatrical representations, a "revelry of culture" as Grogorovius has called it—these things occupied the greater portion of his time. Unlike most scholars, or any previous Pope, Leo

was greatly devoted to sport, as understood in those days, and often spent a month or more at a time absent from the Papal city either fishing or pheasant shooting round the lake of Bolsena, or staying at his favourite hunting-lodge of La Magliana, five miles from Rome, in the fever-laden valley of the Tiber, taking part in grand *battues* of stags, wild boar, and every sort of game, and scandalising the Papal master of ceremonies by appearing in hunting costume and, worst of all, in long riding-boots.[1] When in Rome his life was a less healthy one. The Venetian ambassador at his court has described the ponderous and unwholesome banquets, lasting for hours, and in their lavish profusion and variety of incongruous dishes reminding us of the feasts of the Roman emperors of antiquity. And Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, who was the Pope's guest during the winter of 1514, has graphically detailed how she and her maids-of-honour were plunged into a perpetual round of "banquets, balls, processions, hunting-parties, popular festivals, and dramatic performances."[2]

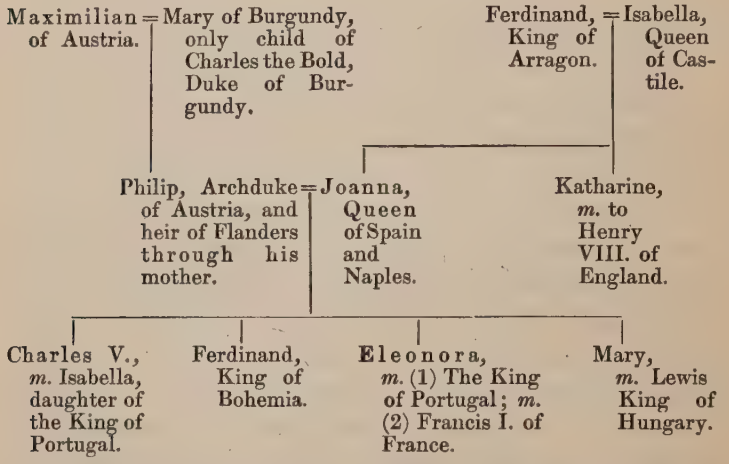
Occupied in this constant succession of festivities, field sports, and literary and artistic delights, Leo led an easy, jovial existence, troubling himself as little as might be with political affairs, and leaving the heavier burdens of the Papacy—whose course was at that epoch becoming from day to day more thickly strewn with rocks and shoals—to be borne by his cousin Giulio.

[1] He pointed out that this was particularly objectionable, in that it prevented the people from kissing the Pope's toe. But Leo does not seem to have considered the argument one carrying much weight.

[2] For a graphic account of the mode of life at the court of Leo X., *see* Mr Herbert Vaughan's *The Medici Popes*.

Contemporary historical events. 1515-1521.

In 1515 the Emperor Maximilian's grandson Charles, then fifteen, was invested with the government of Flanders, his father, Philip, having died in 1506. His genealogy is important, and was as follows:—


Maximilian of Austria.
Mary of Burgundy, only child of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy.
Ferdinand, King of Arragon.
Isabella, Queen of Castile.
Philip, Archduke of Austria, and heir of Flanders through his mother.
Joanna, Queen of Spain and Naples.
Katharine, m. to Henry VIII. of England.
Charles V., m. Isabella, daughter of the King of Portugal.
Ferdinand, King of Bohemia.
Eleonora, m. (1) The King of Portugal; m. (2) Francis I. of France.
Mary, m. Lewis King of Hungary.

In 1516 Ferdinand of Spain died, and Charles was invested with the government of Spain and Naples in place of his mother Joanna, who was set aside, being mad. In the same year the eight years' war, begun by the League of Cambray, was brought to an end by the treaty of Noyon between Francis and Charles, which left France in possession of Lombardy, and Spain in possession of Naples and Sicily.

In 1519 the Emperor Maximilian died, and Charles succeeded to the crown of Austria and Flanders. There ensued five months' rivalry between Francis I. of France, Henry VIII. of England, and Charles of Austria, as to which

of them should be elected Emperor. Finally Charles was elected.

Thus Charles V. inherited Austria from his grandfather Maximilian, Flanders from his grandmother Mary of Burgundy, Spain and Naples from his grandfather Ferdinand and his grandmother Isabella, and the imperial title (with such dominions as still remained to it) by the election of the German Diet. The result of his election as Emperor was a contest between the three rivals which lasted for twenty-eight years, in which Francis and Charles were always opponents, and Henry sided sometimes with one and sometimes with the other.

In 1520 Charles V. visited Henry VIII. in England in May, and in June Francis I. and Henry VIII. held the meeting known as "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," to cement their friendship.

In 1521 Francis declared war against Charles, invading simultaneously Luxembourg from one side of France and Navarre from the other. Henry, led by Wolsey, sided with Charles.

Leo X.

The atmosphere of cultured Paganism which Leo X. created around him in the Vatican was unique. And it has been too well described by Ranke to be given in any other words. He says:—

"At that time men sought to emulate the ancients in their own language. Leo X. was an especial patron of this pursuit. He read the well-written introduction to the history of Jovius

aloud in the circle of his intimates, declaring that since the works of Livy nothing so good had been produced. A patron of the Latin improvisators, we may readily conceive the charm he would find in the talents of Vida, who could set forth a subject like a game of chess, in the full tones of well-cadenced Latin hexameters. A mathematician, celebrated for expounding his science in elegant Latin, was invited from Portugal. In this manner he (Leo) would have had theology and Church history written. . . . It was in his presence that the first tragedy was performed, and also the first comedy produced in the Italian language; and this notwithstanding the objectionable character of a play that imitated Plautus. Ariosto was among the acquaintances of his youth. Machiavelli composed more than one of his works expressly for him. His halls, galleries, and chapels were filled by Raphael with the rich ideal of human beauty. He was a passionate lover of music, and its sounds were daily heard floating through the palace, Leo himself humming the airs performed. . . . Easily does life veil its own incongruities. Such a state of things was directly opposed to Christian sentiment and conviction. The schools of philosophy disputed as to whether the soul were really immortal or whether it were absolutely mortal. Nor are we to believe that these opinions were confined to a few. Erasmus declares himself astonished at the blasphemies that met his ears. Attempts were made to prove to him—a foreigner—by passages from Pliny, that the souls of men are absolutely identical with those of beasts."[1]

Such was the atmosphere in which Leo X. passed his life as Pope; and if this mode of life

[1] Ranke's *History of the Popes.*

was less objectionable than that which had distinguished some of his immediate predecessors it was not less at variance with the urgent needs of the circumstances of the time.

For a storm was beginning to gather north of the Alps destined in no long time to envelop all Europe, and to give the Papacy other things to think of than light literature and the triumphs of Art. The Papacy had fallen to one who neither outraged the world by crime and immorality, like Sixtus IV. and Alexander VI., nor harassed mankind by perpetual war, like Julius II.; but the causes which had long been tending towards a revolt from the Papacy were still steadily at work, and, as the results of the invention of printing increased, were ever gathering greater strength. Printing presses did not only reproduce the Greek and Latin works of Pagan poets; and the ancient manuscripts unearthed by ardent research included the writings of Irenaeus and Tertullian, Cyprian and Basil, no less than those of Cicero and Pliny, Tacitus and Livy. The work of Cosimo and Lorenzo was now about to produce results which they had never anticipated. The "New Learning" was no longer confined to Florence, or to Italy; it had spread far and wide, carrying with it to Germany, to Flanders, to Switzerland, to France, and to England the knowledge of the fraudulent basis on which the Papal claim to supremacy in the Church rested, the knowledge of a Christian age in which there had been no Papacy and all bishops had been of equal rank and authority, and the knowledge of a pre-existing

scheme of Christian doctrine not overlaid by the errors and corruptions which had subsequently grown up in the Church at Rome. And as this knowledge spread, wider and stronger grew the determination to end the existing state of things in the Church, to cast off the usurped supremacy of Rome, and to return to a purer form of Christianity.

Not that the Roman Church is to be justly charged with all that her opponents asserted. The power developed by the Papacy had in its time done great things for religion. During a large part of the earlier Middle Ages the Papacy was the sole authority in Europe which stood for justice and righteousness; and had it not possessed the power it gradually developed it would have been unable to withstand effectively, as it did, the almost universal unrighteousness in high places. But that time was long past, and for at least two centuries the Papacy had only made use of its power for purposes of worldly aggrandisement; with results that caused the condemnation which it incurred to be fully deserved.

The gradual spread of this newly-acquired knowledge, following on the failure of all efforts to obtain reform by means of a General Council,[1] had by degrees made men ready, as soon as opportunity should occur, to fly to arms to obtain that reform which it was evident was to be gained in no other way. This effect had been steadily

[1] We get a curious light thrown on the way the Papacy was hastening to its doom when we find Julius II. in 1510 excommunicating "every town in which a General Council shall assemble"; and also when we find it said during Leo X.'s life that "the bare mention of such a Council is equivalent to a declaration of war."

growing during the pontificates of Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., Alexander VI., Julius II., and Leo X.; but so little did these Popes realise the conditions of the case, that they seemed, by the kind of life they led, bent upon bringing about that appeal to arms. They were bishops of the leading see of Western Christendom; yet anything more opposed to the ideal life of a bishop, whether measured by the standard of the earliest centuries of the Church's life, or by that of our own age, than were their lives it would be hard to conceive. And so the natural result followed in a conflagration which brought cruel wars and innumerable sufferings upon mankind, and tore the civilised world asunder for one hundred and fifty years; but in the end cleansed Christendom.

And here we come upon one of those strange revelations, impossible for any one at the time to have seen, but which History (throwing its light back upon events long past) every now and then shows to those who come afterwards. From the time of Cosimo we see four successive generations of the Medici, the very last family to wish to bring about such a movement as the Reformation, and the very family out of which were to come the two Popes who were the leading opponents of that movement, eagerly engaged in pursuing a course which made them, little as they dreamt it, the chief agents in producing that great revolt from the Papacy.

For it was not Luther, but the "New Learning" which produced the Reformation. A very little consideration will show that no single individual, much less one placed in so obscure a

position as Luther, could have produced a convulsion which shook all Europe from end to end. What Luther did was to set light to materials which were ready to take fire. And this "New Learning" was created, nourished, fostered, and endowed chiefly by the Medici. It is strange indeed to note what energy they devoted, and what wealth they expended, through a period of eighty years, on that which was to bring upon the Papacy such dire results. And to do so during the very time that the Papal throne was occupied by the two members of this family who in turn sat upon it.

Of the five Popes who have been named, Leo X. was the one against whom mankind had by far the fewest accusations to bring; it was, however, his fate to take the action which finally precipitated the crisis. The legacy which Julius II. had left him of building a new St Peter's caused such a heavy drain on the resources of the Papacy[1] that it became necessary to find some unusual means for raising funds. Accordingly, in 1517 Leo published a bull declaring that the Pope has the power of granting Indulgences affecting the state of souls after death; and that this doctrine was an essential article of belief. And this was followed by the scandalous measure of the sale of these Indulgences; thus starting a traffic in holy things which roused northern Europe to a pitch of indignation such as even the crimes of Alexander VI. had failed to call forth. Obviously one who doubted whether souls were

[1] St Peter's is said to have cost from first to last £10,000,000 sterling.

immortal would find no difficulty in declaring his power to grant such Indulgences, or in selling them to any one who would give money for them; and it is very probable that Leo felt astonished at the uproar which his action aroused.

Upon the issue of this bull by the Pope Luther published, and nailed up on the door of the principal church at Wittenberg, his celebrated "Theses" against both the sale of Indulgences and all the additions which had been made to the theory and practice of Indulgences during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, with all that they involved. The system of Indulgences, with the doctrines on which it was based, was no new invention of Leo X.; it had existed for at least three hundred years, and Leo only re-declared it. But the "New Learning" had caused the temper of men's minds to change; and the new departure of *the sale* of such Indulgences came just when men were least disposed to endure it.

The conflagration quickly spread. Germany was soon in a blaze, and Flanders and Switzerland showed signs of following suit. Luther proceeded to rouse all men against the iniquities of the Papacy, and to urge the assembly of a General Council to purge the Church; and at length in June 1520 he published his celebrated *Appeal to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation.* Four thousand copies were distributed with the greatest rapidity, the printers working while Luther wrote; and it immediately produced a strong impression throughout Germany. At the same time, from the other side, Leo published in all countries his bull of 1520, condemning the doctrines of Luther, calling

upon all princes and peoples to seize him and his adherents, and excommunicating all who might harbour them. This bull Luther (protected by the Elector of Saxony) publicly and solemnly burnt at Wittenberg. And so began a conflict which was to last for generations, splitting countries, nations, and even families asunder, and having far-reaching effects which are still extending.

In the following year Leo, anxious to drive the French out of Italy, deserted Francis and engaged to join Charles in an attempt to regain Milan. The Imperial and Papal forces were commanded by the Marquis of Pescara, and in November 1521 Milan was captured. The news reached Leo at his villa of La Magliana on the 22nd November, and filled him with the greatest joy. But the same evening he caught a chill on returning hot and tired from the chase; fever set in, he returned to the Vatican, grew rapidly worse, and died on the 1st December. There was, as usual, a suspicion that his death was due to poison,[1] and Castiglione, who was with him at Magliana, at first believed this; but the *post-mortem* examination which was held failed to confirm the suspicion. And in view of the excessively malarious character of the locality of Magliana nothing could be more probable than that malarial fever contracted at the place where he so often resided should eventually be the cause of his death.

Leo X. was forty-five when he died. He was buried at first in the Vatican. The result of Julius II.'s action in regard to St Peter's was that

[1] Various contemporary authorities have given credit to the rumour that he was poisoned at the instance of Francis I., but there is no evidence whatever to support this.

neither he himself nor any of the next three Popes after him could be buried there; and for several years no tomb was erected to Leo X. But after the death of Clement VII. (1534) it was decided that these two Medici Popes should be interred in the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva; whereupon Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici removed Leo X.'s remains from the Vatican to that Church, and commenced the erection of the tombs of the two Medici Popes, Leo X. and Clement VII., which are to be seen there. After Ippolito's untimely death in 1535, these tombs were completed by Leo X.'s sister, Lucrezia Salviati.

It would have been hard if the Medici, the greatest of all patrons of Art, and belonging to Art's own special home, Florence, should not have been able to show us a unique succession of portraits of themselves, executed by the leading painters of their day. And in Leo X.'s case, none other could of course be employed to paint his portrait than his own great *protegé* and favourite, Raphael. And so Raphael has given us one of the most celebrated portraits in existence, that of Leo X. with his two first cousins, Giulio de' Medici and Luigi Rossi, which hangs in the Pitti Gallery.[1] And it tells us much of Raphael's own character to note that even though he is entirely dependent upon this great patron, yet he will not flatter him, and we feel that we have the man to the life placed before us. Easy-going, jovial, indolent, luxury-loving, shrewd, and worldly wise, all this he was; and just so does Raphael depict him.

[1] Plate XXX.

His tendency to fat was not altogether his fault; he had it throughout life, and endeavoured to combat it by outdoor pursuits, and it was on the advice of his physicians that he carried these on even after he became Pope, notwithstanding the shock that it gave to the ideas held by the Papal officials as to what was becoming in a Pope. His love of learning is indicated in the picture by the book which he has just been studying; his love of all forms of art, both by the illuminations of the book, and by the highly chased silver bell; and his indifferent eyesight (which was proverbial) by the spectacles and the magnifying glass, which latter Jovius says he used on all occasions. Of the two cardinals shown with him, Giulio is the one standing at the right hand of the Pope, who seems to be listening to his advice—their respective attitudes through life. Giulio's clever and intelligent, yet cold, hard face is probably a much better likeness of him than that afterwards painted by Andrea del Sarto (Plate XXXI.). Luigi Rossi was the Pope's secretary. The picture is not only notable for its portraiture, but also as a wonderful study of the combination of colours, the whole (except the Pope's white robe) being in various shades of crimson and red.

Exaltation to the Papacy is probably the severest trial to character which this world holds. And it was one which Leo was not able to bear. A steady deterioration in his character from the time that he became Pope is the most marked feature in him. Many-sided like all his family, he was a remarkable mixture of good and bad points; but in the end the latter predominated.

POPE LEO X., WITH HIS COUSINS GIULIO DE' MEDICI AND LUIGI ROSSI.

By Raphael.

Alinari] [*Pitti Gallery*

CHAPTER XIV

THE TWENTY MONTHS' PONTIFICATE OF ADRIAN VI.

1522-1523

Adrian VI. did not belong to the Medici family, but as his short pontificate of twenty months spans the period between the two Medici Popes, and is important with reference to their history, it is desirable to detail briefly the events of his reign.

On the death of Leo X. an unusual amount of discord took place at the conclave assembled to elect a new Pope. Giulio de' Medici, having been the late Pope's adviser in everything, counted on succeeding him, and employed all the arts of which he was a master to get himself elected. But out of the thirty-nine cardinals assembled as many as eighteen wanted the office themselves, and Giulio was only able by all his efforts to get together a party of fourteen. Wolsey was also a candidate, and had for a long time been swaying the politics of England in favour of Charles V. in the latter's struggle with Francis I., so as to obtain in return the Emperor's influence on his behalf at this election. With the Emperor's candidate in possession of seven votes, with Giulio de' Medici in possession of fourteen, and with the remaining eighteen cardinals each striving to gain votes for

himself, the conclave became a scene of the most disgraceful party struggles, and the discord was so great that it seemed as though no conclusion would ever be reached. At last Giulio's party, merely as an expedient for wearying out their opponents, voted one morning at the daily scrutiny for the most unlikely man they could think of, Cardinal Adrian Dedel of Utrecht, Archbishop of Tortosa, who had been the Emperor's tutor, at that time governing Spain as Charles V.'s representative. To their amazement and disgust a majority of the other cardinals, seeing that they could not succeed themselves, and in order to defeat Giulio's party, at once voted the same. And to the astonishment of all Europe one who had never been dreamt of by any one for such an office, and had made no candidature for it, became Pope. Thus did "the sad and serious Adrian," an earnestly religious Fleming, succeed to the throne so recently occupied by the cultured epicurean, Leo. If all Europe had been searched, a more startling contrast to the latter could not have been found. The new Pope at once gave evidence of his temperament by declining to follow the custom which had so long prevailed of changing his name, preferring to adhere to the practice of the earlier centuries in this respect.

Giulio de' Medici, having thus failed, departed to Florence and took over the charge of Florentine affairs. The absence of any opposition to his doing so shows that no doubt was felt as to the tacit right of a Medici to control the Government of Florence. And this undoubtedly rested on solid ground, and was due to the

instinctive feeling that Florentine affairs only went smoothly when a Medici was at the helm. Passerini's inefficient administration had gradually created considerable discontent, financial affairs were in disorder, and much discord prevailed. But Giulio de' Medici, wanting in so many other respects, had just one good quality, inheriting in full measure that special gift, conspicuous in this family in generation after generation, of a genius for pacifying the angry passions of Florentine political life. By his conciliatory manner, careful attention to public affairs, and knowledge of the feelings of the Florentines, he soon put an end to the prevailing discord, and under his guidance Florentine affairs were satisfactorily administered.

"It was the universal opinion that never since the city had been under the rule of the Medici had it been governed with greater appearance of civil liberty, or more skilful concealment of despotism."[1]

Nardi's remark shows that Giulio was still carefully pursuing his scheme, and biding his time until those of the family who were then children should be grown up, and he himself in a position to adopt a more rigorous attitude towards Florence than that of merely "controlling" her Government.

Meanwhile Adrian VI. was showing himself a Pope such as Rome had not seen for many centuries. He was not only virtuous and frugal, humble and pious, a hater of pomp, and simple and straightforward in character, but he also

[1] Nardi.

viewed with indignation the corruption which abounded in the Church, and set himself vigorously to the task of reform. There was a prompt end to all the pleasant ways which Rome loved, and a *volte-face* which was in some of its aspects almost comic. Bishops to whom life at a distance from Rome was like banishment to a barbarous country were sent off to their neglected bishoprics; the sycophantic throng of poets, philosophers, artists, and musicians who had surrounded Leo were swept out of the Vatican; the supper-parties, hunting-parties, and convivial gatherings came to an abrupt end. The Pope insisted on living in the simplest fashion, with a very small establishment, and spent a great part of his time in prayer and study. Rome was consumed with an unutterable disgust.

Moreover, whereas it had been a main object with every preceding Pope to aggrandise his family and increase the Papal dominions, Adrian VI. refused to do anything of the kind. He restored Urbino to its rightful Duke, Francesco della Rovere, and gave back to the Duke of Ferrara the territories which Leo X. had taken from him. Such acts increased his unpopularity. Adrian, however, was unmoved by the indignant wrath of the corrupt community by which he was surrounded. He set before himself three main objects — the reform of the Church, the restoration of peace in Germany, and the defence of Christendom against the Turks. That he lived too short a time to effect any of these objects does not detract from the honour due to him for having earnestly and by wise methods striven to attain them.

Contemporary historical events. 1521-1523.

In 1521 the Diet of the Empire was assembled by Charles V. at Worms to consider how to check the growth of the new opinions in religion which were causing so much conflict in Germany, with the result that Luther was placed under the ban of the Empire.

In 1522 Charles V. again visited England. Henry VIII., urged on by Wolsey (who still hoped for the Emperor's assistance at the next Papal election, which all felt could not be far distant), now deserted the side of Francis, which he had lately been favouring, and took that of Charles. Meanwhile Solyman, the Turkish Sultan, after invading Hungary and taking Belgrade, turned his victorious arms against Rhodes, which, held by the Knights of St John, had been the bulwark of Christendom against the Turks since the fall of Constantinople. Adrian VI. appealed earnestly to Charles, Francis, and Henry to lay aside their quarrels and unite to save Rhodes from the Turks; but they were too occupied with their mutual jealousies, and the story of Constantinople was repeated. After a stubborn resistance of six months Rhodes had to capitulate. Charles gave Malta to the Knights of St John, and they retired there. In this year 1522 the conquest of Mexico added yet further to Charles's Spanish dominions.

In 1523 Francis I. carried the war into Lombardy, and despatched a large force thither under Bonnivet. At the same time, swayed by his vicious mother, Louise of Savoy, he by various insults drove into rebellion the best

general that he had, Charles, Duke of Bourbon, Constable of France, who, relentlessly persecuted by Louise because he would not marry her, and deprived of his position in the French army, at last in desperation deserted his country, and offered his services to Charles V.

Adrian VI.

In his endeavours to reform the Church, Adrian VI. showed both wisdom and vigour. Not only did he insist on a reform of their ways by the bishops who had so long brought discredit upon their office, but he also set himself with all his power to heal the discord in Germany by searching out the cause of the disease and the remedy required.

For a hundred and twenty years Europe had cried out for a reform of the Church "in head and members." Three great Councils had been assembled, and all the power of the laity throughout Europe put forth to effect this reform; but all had been foiled by the "head," which refused to admit that it needed reformation. Adrian VI. for the first time struck a different note. He ordered Ægidius of Viterbo, the learned Principal of the Augustinian Order, and the most pious man of intellect at that time in Rome, to furnish him with his opinion as to the disease and its remedy; in response to which Ægidius drew up the great document in which he showed the disease to be due to "the misuse of Papal power," and that the remedy was "a limitation of the absolutism of the Head of the Church." Adrian VI. agreed with the views expressed, and the

result was the celebrated set of instructions issued by him in 1522 to the Nuncio Chieregato, in which the Pope declared that the disease had spread from the head to the members, from the Pope to the bishops and cardinals. He wrote, "We have all sinned, there is not one that doeth good," and announced his determination to carry out a radical reform. Had Adrian VI. lived longer, widespread results must have ensued from such an edict emanating from such a source. But it was not to be; and when the grave closed over Adrian VI., the last non-Italian Pope, it closed also over all chance of a reform of the head and members conducted by the "head" himself.

Not, however, that Adrian VI. took the Protestant side by any means. He was both learned enough and wise enough to see the error of both sides; and he met the fate of all who are able to do this, and are honest enough to let both know it. To the Diet of the Empire, then assembled to discuss the subject, he addressed a most powerful protest against the doctrines of Luther, while in the same document acknowledging candidly, and in the most positive terms, the corruptions of which Luther and his followers accused the Church of Rome, and showing that he was determined to eradicate them. Adrian VI. presented the almost unique instance in that age of a man of the humblest birth who had risen in the Church solely through the great respect entertained for his profound theological learning;[1]

[1] It was this which had originated his advancement in his own country, and which later on caused him to be selected as tutor to the future Charles V.

and this justly-deserved reputation, joined to his candid acknowledgment of the corruptions of the Church, with the stringent measures he was taking to extirpate them, made his protest against the new doctrines, and his demonstration of the ignorance on which they were to a large extent based, far more forcible than that which any other Pope of that time could have made. Whereas others maintained such doctrinal points by appeals to this or that precedent, Adrian did so out of his own knowledge as a theologian. Thus the gentle and humble Adrian condemned Luther's opinions much more sharply than Leo X. had ever done; while he also passed severe censures upon the princes of Germany for allowing them to spread owing to their own ignorance and their attaching greater importance to political contests than to religion.

Truly many centuries had passed away since any head of the Roman Church had spoken in this fashion, or been animated by sentiments like these. But in that corrupt age a Pope of this type was obnoxious to all parties. He was obnoxious to the followers of Luther for disagreeing with their doctrines; to the princes of Germany, who, as he rightly said, only paid heed to the matter so far as they could make use of it for a political purpose; to the cardinals, who bitterly resented reforms which robbed them of all for which they cared; and, above all, he was intensely obnoxious to the Roman people, who loved a Pope who spent money freely and was troubled with no inconvenient morality. Both of the two latter parties looked upon Adrian VI. and his ways

with a horrified disgust too deep for words; the change from the one extreme to the other, from the easy-going, lavishly generous Leo, to the austere reformer Adrian, was too bitter a contrast. A Pope who admitted that the Church needed a reform, and was bent on carrying it out, was altogether insupportable. Of course his end was certain; Rome wanted no Popes of this sort, and would not endure them; that he existed even so long as twenty months is extraordinary.[1] At the end of that time he was poisoned; and lest there should be any doubt of the fact, or of their great relief thereat, the Roman people on the night after his death adorned his chief physician's house with garlands, and with the inscription written over them, "To the deliverer of his country."

Thus ended Adrian VI., who, had his lot been cast in other times, would have accomplished much for the Church. He died on the 14th September 1523, and was buried in the Church of Santa Maria dell' Anima. And the epitaph written for his tomb by his faithful friend and companion, Cardinal Enckenvoert, was certainly suitable;—"Proh dolor! quantum refert in quae tempora vel optimi cujusque virtus incidat."[2]

[1] He was only actually in Rome a year, as he did not reach there from Spain till the 29th August 1522.

[2] "Alas what grief! Of how great importance it is in what times the excellence of each exalted man falls."

CHAPTER XV

GIULIO (CLEMENT VII.)

Born 1478. (*Pope* 1523-1534). *Died* 1534.

(1) THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF HIS PONTIFICATE.

CLEMENT VII. has generally been looked upon as a more or less feeble intriguer, humbly carrying out during the pontificate of his cousin Leo X. plans originated by the latter, and involved in disasters in his own pontificate owing to want of ability. How far from the truth is the first portion of this view of him has already been shown; while as regards the second portion it will be seen in the sequel that the disasters in question, far from being due to any want of ability, were deliberately incurred for the sake of a single definite object which governed all his actions.

Giulio de' Medici,[1] son of the Giuliano killed in the Pazzi Conspiracy, was tall and good-looking, spare in figure, of agreeable manners, and, except his uncle Lorenzo the Magnificent, was the cleverest of all this able family. Ranke, speaking of him after he became Pope, says:—

[1] Plates XXXI. and XXXIII. The portrait by Andrea del Sarto (Plate XXXI.) shows him as he was at the beginning of his eleven years' pontificate, that by Bronzino (Plate XXXIII.) towards the end of it. All accounts call him as a young man handsome.

POPE CLEMENT VII. AT THE AGE OF FORTY-FIVE.
By Andrea del Sarto.

Brogi] [*Museo Nazionale, Naples.*

"He spoke with equal knowledge of his subject whether that were philosophy and theology, or mechanics and hydraulic architecture. In all affairs he displayed an extraordinary acuteness; the most perplexing questions were unravelled, the most difficult circumstances penetrated to the very bottom, by his extreme sagacity. No man could debate a point with more address, and he manifested a circumspect ability in practice which none could surpass."

At the same time he was, as we have seen, of a cold-hearted and crafty disposition, and absolutely unscrupulous, with none of those qualities of kind-heartedness, magnanimity, and cheerful *bonhomie*, which in the case of his cousin Leo X. helped to balance great faults.

In this member of the family we see the Medici reaching their highest importance in the politics of Europe, and their history becoming for a time to a large extent that of Europe. But more than this; we see in him one who turned this family from those aims which his ancestors had followed, who set it upon a path where even success could confer no glory, and who, leading it to strive after an ignoble aim, brought upon the name of Medici obloquy and condemnation where before it had won honour and esteem. This course of action, already steadily pursued by Giulio ever since the family were reinstated in Florence, was now to have a greater development.

Upon the death of Adrian VI. the same disgraceful scenes which had characterised the previous conclave were repeated; and this time they lasted much longer. For seven weeks the

bribing and intriguing continued, Giulio's two chief antagonists being Wolsey and Alessandro Farnese.[1] At length, on the 19th November, Giulio triumphed and was elected Pope, assuming the name of Clement VII. He was then forty-five years old.

On becoming Pope the first point which Giulio, now Clement VII., had to settle was how to retain the rule of Florence in the elder branch of the family,[2] seeing that he himself could no longer reside there, that Lorenzo's only child was a girl of four years old, and that Giuliano's[3] son, Ippolito, was too young at present to be entrusted with authority. Under these circumstances, Clement decided for the present again to delegate the control of Florentine affairs to Cardinal Passerini as his representative. Accordingly, Passerini was in May 1524 sent to Florence, and for the next three years Florentine affairs were administered by him under orders from Rome, though the Signoria continued to be ostensibly the ruling body.

With Cardinal Passerini Clement also sent Giuliano's son Ippolito, now a handsome, intelligent, and attractive youth of fifteen, who was looked upon by all as destined to succeed to the authority exercised by his father twelve years before with such satisfaction to the Florentines.

[1] The greater part of the votes were divided between Giulio de' Medici and Wolsey, while the Cardinal Farnese offered 200,000 ducats to either side in his own behalf.

[2] *See* chap. xii. p. 401.

[3] The Giuliano killed in the Pazzi conspiracy (Clement's father), and the Giuliano, brother of Leo X. (Ippolito's father), must here be distinguished.

He took up his abode with Cardinal Passerini at the Medici Palace, assumed the title of "Il Magnifico," and was elected a member of the Government. A few months later there was also sent to Passerini's charge, from Naples, where he had been brought up, another boy, Alessandro, then about thirteen, who now for the first time appears in connection with Florence, and whose woolly hair and negro-like appearance had already caused him to be called "The Moor."[1] This boy's origin was a secret. Born during the time that the family were in exile he was in reality the son of Clement himself,[2] but the latter had hidden the fact, and kept the boy out of sight as long as he could. Subsequently, after Giuliano, Lorenzo, and Leo X. were all dead, Clement brought this boy forward as an illegitimate son of Lorenzo. The fact that Clement had not begun to make this claim, and to pass Alessandro off as Lorenzo's heir, at the time when he first became Pope is corroborated by what took place on that occasion. For when Clement on becoming Pope consulted the envoys of Florence as to what he should do with regard to that state,

[1] "His mother was a mulatto slave, and he had the dark skin, thick lips, and curly hair of a negro." (Gino Capponi.)

[2] There is now no doubt of this, though none cared at the time to contradict the Pope's assertion that he was the son of Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino), and as such he has generally been mentioned in history, historians contenting themselves with saying that he was reputed to be so, but was more probably Clement's own son. Not only was the fact generally known in the family, but also Clement's subsequent conduct in so persistently, in spite of many obstacles, pushing forward this detested, incapable and vicious youth in place of the capable and universally liked Ippolito, would alone suffice to prove it. Moreover, the historian Ammirato states that afterwards, when Clement and Alessandro were both dead, Cosimo I. told him positively that Alessandro was Clement's son. Lorenzino said that he was not of the Medici blood at all (*see* chap. xviii. p. 498, footnote).

three of them advised him[1] to give the supreme power to a gonfaloniere appointed from year to year "until Ippolito was old enough to rule." It is significant that it was Ippolito who was mentioned, and not Alessandro, as must have been the case had the latter been declared at this time to be the heir of Lorenzo. It was not until three or four years later that Clement devised the scheme of passing over Ippolito in favour of Alessandro, and giving as a reason that he was Lorenzo's son.

The eleven years' pontificate of Clement VII. (1523-1534) was a troubled time in Europe. The triangular duel which Charles V., Francis I., and Henry VIII. carried on lasted for twenty-six years, never ceasing until Francis and Henry both died in the same year (1547); and during the first half of this long struggle it was Clement VII. who kept this contest alive. The latter during the whole of his reign as Pope was employed in prosecuting vast schemes of "diplomacy," all with the object of playing off Francis against Charles to prevent their combining against himself, and of effecting his own designs while pretending to favour each of theirs in turn. Thus, whereas Adrian VI. had striven to create peace between them, Clement's whole aim was to inflame their animosities to the utmost. In this he succeeded only too well; and by their unceasing wars large portions of Europe were laid waste, ravaged by ruthless and undisciplined armies, whose track was like that of a pestilence.

[1] *Sommario della Storia d'Italia,* by Francesco Vettori. Vettori was himself one of the envoys on this occasion, and one of those who gave this advice.

It is curious to note the sanguine expectations which were formed when Clement VII. succeeded to the Papal throne, and how strangely they were falsified. It was anticipated that his pontificate would show all that had been best in that of Leo X., while avoiding its defects. Belonging to a family so renowned for their patronage of literary and artistic culture, and being himself fond of art, science, music, and the conversation of learned men, it was confidently asserted that there would be a restoration of that culture which had been put to flight by his predecessor; while from his sober temperament it was presumable that there would be none of that extravagance and luxury which had marked the reign of Leo X. Lastly, of his great administrative ability there was no doubt; he had ruled Rome well in Leo's day; while at Florence he had on two separate occasions put an end to dissensions, re-organised the finances, and given general satisfaction in the midst of discordant elements. There appeared therefore every ground for the confident expectation entertained that his pontificate would be an unusually satisfactory one.

Yet the result was extraordinarily the reverse. The difficulties surrounding him on becoming Pope and the qualities he possessed for meeting them, are thus described by Trollope:—

"The time was a difficult one for any Pope. But a straight course along an open road would have been less congenial to the talents and temperament of Giulio de' Medici than one where intrigue, craft, and wily policy were necessary, and the situation was one exactly suited to his

talents and disposition. Calm, moderate, unimpassioned, active, vigilant, astute, with nothing genial, large, or noble about him, but decorous, correct, and eminently respectable, while at bottom thoroughly unscrupulous, it might have been thought that Clement was just the man for the occasion, and that he if any man was bound to rise a winner from the slippery game of the politics of the time. Yet the result was such that his pontificate has been called the most disastrous of any pontiff who ever sat on the Papal throne."[1]

Clement was not long in showing what would be the general character of his policy. Soon after he became Pope the Emperor, anxious to bring about that reform of the Church which Adrian VI. had not been given time to effect, began to suggest the assembly of a General Council. Clement professed entire agreement, but by plausible stipulations contrived to create difficulty after difficulty in the Emperor's path, hoping meanwhile that the pressure of war would soon give the latter other matters to attend to. This result soon followed; and during the next four years Clement's endeavours to keep the two great rivals at feud were so successful that widespread war swept backwards and forwards in turn over Burgundy, northern France, southern France, Savoy, northern Italy, and southern Italy.

Clement at first took the side against Francis, who was beset with difficulties. Three armies had entered France, a Spanish force advancing into Languedoc, a German one entering France on the

[1] *History of the Commonwealth of Florence*, by Adolphus Trollope.

north-east, and an English one occupying Picardy. On the other hand, a large French army, under Bonnivet, had, as already noted, invaded Lombardy. Charles's armies in northern and southern France were repulsed by the French; but in Lombardy, where the Imperial army was commanded by Lannoy, Viceroy of Naples, with whom were Pescara[1] and Bourbon, the French suffered serious reverses. All through these wars the Spanish generals were superior to the French; Francis had no good general, and suffered perpetually from the irretrievable loss he had caused himself by having driven from his service Charles, Duke of Bourbon.

In 1524 the French army in Lombardy was at length forced by Lannoy to commence a disastrous retreat towards France, and in this retreat was severely defeated at the passage of the Sesia, where the Chevalier Bayard, the knight "sans peur et sans reproche," who commanded the rearguard of Bonnivet's army, was mortally wounded, and died on the field. The Imperial army, driving the French before it, advanced into southern France, and laid siege to Marseilles. Francis (as though the ordinary miseries of war were not enough) met this invasion by laying waste the whole of Provence, the garden of southern France, in order that the invading army might be unable to subsist; the entire population of the district was made to move elsewhere, villages were razed to the ground, cattle driven off, crops destroyed, and the sufferings of the people were almost as great as though they had been the

[1] The husband of Vittoria Colonna.

captives of a hostile force. By this measure the Imperial army, after heavy losses from disease and starvation, was forced to quit France, and retired again into Italy. Clement, who hitherto had encouraged Charles, now began to intrigue with Francis, and in December 1524 concluded a secret treaty with him.

Meanwhile Francis, elated by his success in Provence, prepared, against the advice of his ministers and generals, and even of his mother, Louise of Savoy, to invade Lombardy with a large army under his own command. All the flower of the French nobility flocked to join this expedition. Francis appointed his mother Regent of France in his absence, and marched for Italy with the most powerful army which had till then been seen in war.

At first Francis was successful. He took Milan, and then proceeded to attack Pavia, defended by the experienced Spanish general Antonio de Leyva. During three months Pavia sustained a most rigorous siege, everything known to the engineers of that age being employed to reduce it. Francis added strong reinforcements to his army, bringing up a large body of Swiss troops and also receiving troops sent to join him by Clement, commanded by Giovanni delle Bande Nere,[1] now the foremost commander of his time among the Italians. Meanwhile Lannoy, Pescara, and Bourbon were collecting troops sufficient to oppose the powerful army of Francis, and at length advanced to the relief of Pavia. A great battle was fought outside the walls on the 24th February

[1] *See* vol. ii. chap. xxiii.

1525, in which the French sustained the most fatal defeat known in those times. The battle of Pavia is the greatest military event of the sixteenth century. Francis I. (who very nearly lost his life owing to his refusal to surrender to the Duke of Bourbon) was taken prisoner; nearly the whole of the French nobility were either killed or captured;[1] ten thousand men of the French army were killed and the rest surrendered; and in a fortnight after the battle not a Frenchman remained in Italy except those who were prisoners in Lannoy's hands. It was a crushing defeat for France, whose whole military strength had been collected in this army commanded in person by the King. Lannoy at once sent news of his victory to Charles V., who was in Spain, and shortly afterwards escorted Francis I. thither as a prisoner. Clement VII., aghast at the mistake he had made, deserted Francis, and hastened to make a treaty with the Emperor; but it was a hollow affair, and Clement's punishment was only postponed until the Emperor had leisure for it.

For one of Clement's pieces of deception at this time Florence has reason to be glad. After the battle of Pavia Clement in his terror was anxious to propitiate Federigo Gonzaga, Marquis[2] of Mantua, one of the Emperor's chief adherents in Italy. Gonzaga expressed a desire to possess the portrait of Leo X., painted by Raphael, which was in the Medici Palace at Florence (Plate XXX.). Clement promised he should have it, and wrote

[1] One exception was the Duc d'Alençon (the husband of Francis's sister, Marguerite), who disgracefully fled from the field, and whose flight was partly the cause of the defeat. He died two months later.

[2] He was created a Duke by Charles V. in 1530.

from Rome, ordering that the picture should be sent to the Marquis of Mantua as soon as a copy of it, which he at the same time directed to be made by Andrea del Sarto, was completed. Andrea del Sarto made so good a copy that no one could tell the difference; and this copy was sent to Mantua purporting to be the original. Even Giulio Romano, Raphael's own pupil, did not detect the deception until it was pointed out to him years afterwards by Vasari. It is impossible to believe that this fraud was carried out without the secret orders of Clement VII. The result, however, is that the original remained in the possession of the Medici, and hangs with that portion of their pictures which now forms the Pitti Gallery in Florence.[1]

In 1526 Francis I., after thirteen months' captivity in Spain, obtained his liberty on condition that he would restore Burgundy, would agree not to attack Milan again, and would reinstate Charles, Duke of Bourbon, in the estates of which the latter had been robbed by Louise of Savoy. Some writers have maintained that the terms were too severe, but, on the contrary, in view of the crushing victory which Charles had won at Pavia, they must be held to be exceedingly moderate; no indemnity was extorted nor any attempt made to cripple the power of France for the future. Francis I. gave his two sons, Francis and Henry, then respectively ten and nine years old, as hostages for this agreement. But as soon as he reached France he repudiated the whole of it, and was absolved therefrom by Clement, who had resolved

[1] The copy by Andrea del Sarto is now at Naples.

again to change sides, since Charles was becoming too strong.

Clement now formed an alliance which he called the "Holy League," consisting of France, England, and the Pope, with Venice and Florence, to oppose Charles, to relieve Francesco Sforza, besieged in Milan by the Imperial army, and to set Francis's sons at liberty. Clement expected that Francis would be the life and soul of this league. But Francis, owing to his defeat and imprisonment, had gone through such a time of distress that his spirit was for a time cowed; he desired tranquillity, and for the first time failed to be roused by the Pope's incitements; he delayed doing anything, except to allow certain troops to be engaged for him by Clement in Italy, among them the corps commanded by the latter's relative, Giovanni delle Bande Nere, for whom Clement was, as usual, anxious to find some fighting to do.[1] The forces assembled by Venice and the Pope were placed under command of the Duke of Urbino and advanced against the Imperial army in Lombardy. But the Duke of Urbino (no great friend of Clement) by losing several opportunities gave Bourbon time to bring up reinforcements to the Imperial army. Bourbon immediately took command of the latter and very soon captured Milan, and drove the allied forces to retire on Lodi. It was in these operations that Giovanni delle Bande Nere was killed near Mantua.

While these events were taking place in France and Italy, Germany was in a state of turmoil through the conflict on the subject of religion,

[1] *See* vol. ii. chap. xxiii.

which had now developed into actual war. To allay these conditions, which weakened Germany at a time when it was especially necessary that she should be strong, Charles assembled the Diet of the Empire at Speier to consider the religious differences, and this meeting of the Diet granted great toleration to Luther's opinions; so much so that the resolutions passed on this occasion came to form a sort of Magna Charta to the Protestant cause. They had a political object. The Turks were now pouring into Hungary, and the Emperor was urgent to oppose them, but could not do so as long as half his territories were torn by these dissensions. He hoped by the settlement at Speier to get the Protestant princes of Germany to march with him against the Turks. It was, however, already too late, and in August the Turks gained a great victory over Hungary at the battle of Mohacs, in which Lewis II., King of Hungary, was killed.

Though not evident at the time, we can see now that Clement VII. by his course of action became himself the chief assistant to the cause of Protestantism. Every time that he induced Francis to attack Charles he made it more difficult for the latter to deal with the rising tide of revolt against the Church taking place in Germany, which needed all Charles's attention, and which he would probably have assuaged, or at all events greatly mitigated, had he not been forced to devote most of his attention to the defence of those parts of his Empire attacked by Francis, attacks in most cases instigated or encouraged by Clement.

Meanwhile retribution was being prepared for the latter. The Emperor thought it time to give him a lesson, and punish him for his various tortuous dealings. In September 1526, therefore, the Emperor drew up a manifesto systematically setting forth the treacherous manner in which the Pope had acted throughout the previous three years.[1] He then instructed his agent, Moncada, to stir up the powerful family of the Colonna, who attacked and plundered the Vatican, drove Clement to take refuge in the castle of St Angelo, and there made him, as a condition of his release, agree to renounce the Holy League, to withdraw his troops from Lombardy, and to give hostages for his good faith.

But Clement was not to be held firm even by the giving of hostages.[2] As soon as he was again free he repudiated his engagements, collected a force, attacked the territory of the Colonna, razed to the ground fourteen of their castles and villages, and executed a general massacre of men, women, and children belonging to them; thus filling up the cup of his misdeeds.

Then the Emperor (always deliberate, and never relinquishing any purpose which he had once formed) prepared a terrible vengeance. He sent, during November and December, additional troops from Spain to Lannoy, his commander in southern Italy, and from Germany to Bourbon, his commander in northern Italy (Pescara having just died), and ordered Bourbon on their arrival to

[1] The historian Guicciardini, writing some fifteen years afterwards, called Clement's conduct during the years 1524-1526 an "*eterna infamia.*"

[2] One of these hostages was Filippo Strozzi, who nearly lost his life in consequence of the Pope's action (chap. xvi. p. 458).

march upon the Papal States. The Imperial army in Italy was composed of all the greatest ruffians from every race in Europe, Spanish and Germans predominating. They had been for some time deliberately kept by Charles V. without pay, and the state of want to which they were reduced made these troops almost unmanageable except by Bourbon, who from his many qualities as a general had a wonderful power over them. Nevertheless, his position was rendered most difficult. Northern Italy, ravaged by these incessant wars, was almost a desert, and could no longer support his troops. To increase his difficulties there now came to join his army, already in arrears of pay, this addition of sixteen thousand Lutheran troops from Germany, who had not only been promised their pay on reaching Lombardy and were bent upon plunder, but also came with a fixed determination to execute vengeance upon the Pope, to whose faithlessness they attributed all the woes of Christendom; to his charge were laid the long continuance of war throughout Europe, the defeats sustained from the Turks, even their own present state of privation; and they openly announced their intention of marching to Rome and hanging the Pope. Their commander, Frundsberg, ostentatiously carried with him a silken rope for this especial purpose.

In January 1527 Bourbon made over the government of Milan to Antonio de Leyva, and set his army in motion southwards. On reaching Bologna, where he halted for a short time during February, a mutiny of his troops, who were now in the greatest destitution, was only pacified by his promising to march upon Rome. Clement,

threatened by Bourbon from the north and Lannoy from the south, and terrified to find the same storm coming upon himself which he had brought upon so many others, sent urgent appeals to Francis to deliver him. But Francis had not yet recovered from the blow to his spirit caused by his own defeat and captivity, while he himself had certain scores to pay off upon Clement, and he made no effort to prevent matters from taking their course. Bourbon's unruly horde continued, therefore, to move slowly forwards, while Clement clamoured for aid in every direction, and even offered 100,000 ducats if this would appease the Lutheran troops. But the latter were obdurate. Clement made overtures to Lannoy, who came, bringing the above sum of money to Bourbon; but more than twice that amount was due for the arrears of pay alone, and Lannoy dared not approach the camp, as the Lutheran troops, bent upon personal vengeance on the Pope, would not hear of any truce, and threatened to kill even Lannoy himself, if he interfered with them; while Frundsberg, their own immediate commander, was just at this time struck down by apoplexy (April 1527). They were determined to hang the Pope and sack Rome, would obey no other general than Bourbon, and would not obey even him unless he led them towards Rome.

So while Clement, now in the greatest terror, offered every possible and impossible concession to any who would come to his assistance, the resistless torrent rolled steadily on through the valleys of Romagna and Umbria, Bourbon subsisting his hungry and ferocious troops on the country passed

through, whose inhabitants had sore reason to curse Clement for bringing this terrible visitation upon them. On the evening of the 5th May the army encamped outside Rome, and the troops at last feasted their eyes on its palaces, and promised themselves, as the reward of all their hardships, the plunder of the Papal city. Next morning Bourbon ("the ferocious Bourbon," as his enemies called him, fastening upon himself the chief characteristic of the miserable material given him to command), whom his many misfortunes had made tired of life, drew up his army for the attack. He led the assault himself, ascended the first ladder placed against the walls, and fell mortally wounded as his victorious troops gained the city, his last act being to have himself covered with a cloak that his soldiers might not be discouraged by seeing his condition (6th May 1527).[1]

Then followed the terrible sack of Rome. As the Imperial army burst into the city Clement took refuge in the castle of St Angelo, while his troops were being pursued by enemies who gave no quarter, and who were doubly enraged by the death of their adored commander; and Clement was now able to see some of the results of his crafty policy and double-dealing. The Pandemonium which followed is indescribable. The Lutheran troops took pleasure in destroying and defiling all that the Catholic world had revered. Robertson says:—

"It is impossible to describe, or even imagine, the misery and horror of the scene that followed.

[1] The story of France's great soldier, Charles, Duke of Bourbon, is one of the saddest in history. His soldiers buried him at Gaeta, where they erected a noble monument to his memory and that of his wife, Susanne de Bourbon.

Whatever a city taken by storm can dread from military rage unrestrained by discipline, whatever excesses the ferocity of the Germans, the avarice of the Flemings, or the licentiousness of the Spaniards could commit, these wretched inhabitants of Rome were obliged to suffer. Churches, palaces, and houses were plundered without distinction. No age or character was exempt from injury. Cardinals, nobles, priests, matrons, virgins, were all the prey of the soldiers, and at the mercy of men deaf to the voice of humanity. Nor did these outrages cease, as is usual in towns carried by assault, when the first fury of the storm was over; the Imperial army, unable to be controlled by any general now Bourbon was dead, kept possession of the city for many months, and during all that time the brutalities of the soldiers continued. Their booty in ready money alone amounted to 1,000,000 ducats; what they raised by ransoms and exactions far exceeded that sum. Rome, though taken various times by the northern nations in the fifth and sixth centuries, was never treated with so much cruelty by the barbarous and heathen Huns, Vandals or Goths, as now by this terrible foe."[1]

While these scenes were being enacted Clement, the author of all this, was a close prisoner in the castle of St Angelo, besieged by those troops who, as he well knew, had often sworn to hang him, and were now uncontrolled by the only general who had had any power over them. On Bourbon's death the command devolved upon Philibert, Prince of Orange; but the troops made no pretence of obeying him, and it was with difficulty that he could even persuade some of them to

[1] *Charles V.*, by W. Robertson.

desist from plunder and invest the castle of St Angelo. The Duke of Urbino advanced with an army consisting of Venetians, Florentines, and Swiss in the pay of Francis I., strong enough to have overpowered the army of the Prince of Orange. But the Duke of Urbino[1] had an old score to pay off against Clement, since the time when the latter had helped to rob him of his duchy. So to tantalise him by raising false hopes in his mind, he merely brought his army near enough for Clement to see it, and then marched away, leaving him surrounded by the furious enemies who thirsted for his blood. The Emperor courteously expressed sorrow at the Pope's misfortune, but the Imperial army remained where it was. Nor in fact could any power have removed it; for the troops found Rome exceedingly pleasant quarters, and had not the slightest intention of obeying any order to quit the city so long as anything remained to eat or to plunder. Clement continued besieged by them in the castle of St Angelo for seven months; and his action when, reduced to great straits, he bade Cellini (who was with him there) melt down his tiara, was symbolical of the position to which he had brought himself. At length he contrived to escape disguised as a pedlar, and fled in miserable plight and with only one attendant to Orvieto, where he arrived in a most forlorn state, destitute of everything, a disastrous conclusion to four years of tortuous scheming (8th December 1527). The Imperial army remained firmly planted in Rome, and seemed likely to take root there for

[1] The portraits of Francesco della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, and of his wife, Eleonora Gonzaga (the daughter of Isabella d'Este), are to be seen in the Uffizi Gallery.

good; Lannoy succeeded the Prince of Orange in command, but died of the plague; all the splendour of the Rome of Leo X. was destroyed; and when, after nine months' occupation, the army, utterly demoralised by its long debauch, was driven out of the city by the plague, they left it a ruined and desolated waste.

Meanwhile, as soon as the news arrived of Pope Clement's disaster, and of his being besieged in the castle of St Angelo, Florence, seeing now an opportunity of throwing off the yoke which he had long been craftily but steadily tightening upon her, revolted from his authority, and for the third time banished the Medici family (19th May 1527).[1] At the same time Venice, taking advantage of the opportunity, seized Ravenna and other places in the States of the Church; and the Dukes of Ferrara and Urbino resumed possession of those territories of which the Papacy had deprived them. At this juncture also Henry VIII. of England began to press Clement to grant him a divorce from his Queen, Katharine of Arragon, the aunt of Charles V. But Clement was truly not just then in a position to offend Charles further, or to give attention to such matters.

[1] *See* chap. xvi.

CHAPTER XVI

CLARICE DE' MEDICI (CLARICE STROZZI)

Born 1493. (*Married* 1508.) *Died* 1528.

Clarice, the second of the two children of Pietro the Unfortunate, and sister of Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino), was far more capable than either her father, mother, or brother. Her uncle, Leo X., used to say that it would have been well for the family if Clarice had been the man, and her brother, Lorenzo, the woman. She had a high spirit and strong intelligence, and frequently saved her husband from disaster by her courage and ability. Her very interesting portrait,[1] taken when she was about seventeen, shows a fine, strong, intellectual face, fully in keeping with the character she afterwards displayed.

Clarice's life exemplified the vicissitudes of the Medici fortunes; for during her comparatively short life the family were twice in the highest prosperity and twice in the deepest adversity. Born in the Medici Palace when her family was at the height of the splendour to which it had been brought by her grandfather, Lorenzo the Magnificent, she was, when a year old, carried away from Florence when

[1] Plate XXXII. This portrait is highly interesting, being the only one of Clarice in existence. It was evidently painted a year or two after her marriage. It is here reproduced for the first time by the kind permission of Prince Strozzi, in whose family it has been an heirloom for four centuries.

CLARICE DE' MEDICI, DAUGHTER OF PIETRO THE UNFORTUNATE.

Burton] *Reproduced by permission of Prince Strozzi.*

her parents were exiled; and the whole of her girlhood was passed in the nomadic existence entailed on her family by that exile. Her father died when she was ten years old; and when she was fifteen her mother, Alfonsina, gave her in marriage to Filippo Strozzi, head of the Strozzi family, and a man of much influence both at Florence and at the Papal court. Although her husband was fined and banished for this marriage with her he was suffered to return to Florence about a year later, bringing his young bride with him. Then when Clarice was nineteen came the return of the Medici to Florence, and her uncle, Giuliano, became ruler of the State; and in the following year that rule passed to her brother, Lorenzo.

Clarice was the first mistress of the handsome Strozzi palace in the Via Tornabuoni, which, begun twenty years before, was first occupied when in 1510 she and her husband were allowed to return to Florence, though it was not finally completed until 1536.

In 1513 her uncle Giovanni became Pope, and being a favourite with him, Clarice was often in Rome during the years of his pontificate. In 1519, when she was twenty-six, her brother Lorenzo died, and her distant relative, Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, whom she cordially detested, came to administer Florentine affairs. And when in 1523 he became Pope, Clarice had opportunities of seeing the gradual working of his policy as regards Florence, and the change of feeling towards her family which it produced.

We hear of her again in Rome in 1524, where for some time she resided, taking charge of her

brother Lorenzo's only child, Catherine, then five years old. But in 1525, affairs in Rome after the battle of Pavia becoming unsettled, Clarice returned to Florence, where she had the mortification of seeing that palace which was associated in her mind with all the glory of her family occupied by the two illegitimate scions of the family, Ippolito and Alessandro, and their guardian, Cardinal Passerini, Pope Clement's representative.

In the following year Clarice by her boldness and resource saved her husband's life; not the only occasion of the kind during her life. When in September 1526 the Colonna forced Clement to give hostages as a guarantee of his good faith, the latter gave as a hostage his friend, Filippo Strozzi, who was then in Rome; and when Clement broke his agreement and committed his atrocious attack on the Colonna,[1] Strozzi's life was in the greatest danger. Clarice, who had remained in Florence much out of health, as soon as she heard this news got into her litter, travelled with all speed to Rome (where she declared that Filippo had been "basely and foully sent like an innocent lamb to the slaughter"), and by her energetic action on arrival there eventually obtained her husband's liberty.

Early in 1527 the storm which he had provoked burst upon Clement; he was besieged in the castle of St. Angelo; Florence rose in revolt against the thraldom which had been gradually imposed upon her ever since he had become the ruling spirit of the family; and for the third time in their history the Medici were banished.

[1] *See* chap. xv. p. 449.

On this occasion Clarice gave full evidence of her strength of character and lofty spirit. Filippo, her husband, unable to decide which side to take, remained shut close in his palace, full of doubt and uncertainty. No such feelings oppressed his high-spirited wife. Clarice, justly hating Clement VII., was not at all displeased at seeing him brought to disgrace and disaster; the more pride she took in her ancestors the more wrath she felt at the course being pursued by the existing head of the family; and she eagerly seized the opportunity of dealing a blow at his plans which might be a decisive one. She first advised her irresolute husband to stick to the side of the Republic, advice which he eventually took. Then sallying forth to the Medici Palace, the home of her ancestors, now tenanted by those whom she considered only "half-Medici," unworthy to be the bearers of that once honoured name, she proceeded to eject them in the following fashion. The scene in the Medici Palace on that 19th May 1527, and Clarice's part therein, is thus vividly described by Trollope:—

"In the Medici Palace, after the news had come of the terrible sack of Rome, and that Pope Clement had fled and was closely besieged in the castle of St. Angelo, and while in the Palazzo della Signoria the great Council, hastily assembled, and still only half determined to take the decisive step, discussed a revolution, sat the Cardinal Passerini with his three young charges[1] awaiting the decision of the Council, dismayed and irresolute; while the whole length of the

[1] Ippolito, aged seventeen, Alessandro, aged fifteen, and the little "Duchessina," Catherine, aged eight.

Via Larga outside presented to one looking on it from the Medicean palace a threatening, billowy sea of heads. To them thus sitting trembling and perplexed, entered the haughty and intrepid Clarice, bent on bringing them to a very speedy resolution. Clarice hated her relative Clement, and burnt with indignation at seeing the illegitimate Ippolito and Alessandro made inheritors of her family's honours and pre-eminence. . . . Entering the room with haughty step and flashing eye, full of indignation, and raising her voice so loud that it was even heard by those in the street outside, she bitterly taunted the trembling Cardinal at having brought his own and his master's affairs to such a pass, contrasting how differently things were managed 'by my ancestors, who were *true* Medici, and who with benevolence and gentleness gained the loyalty of the Florentines, and so found them constant in adversity.[1] But *you* (turning to Ippolito and Alessandro) who by your conduct have betrayed the secret of your birth, and convinced the world that you are not of the blood of the Medici, and not you alone but Clement also, unworthy and wrongfully Pope,[2] and now most rightfully prisoner in St Angelo, why are you surprised that all are this day against you? Now therefore depart from a house to which you have no claim, and from a city which has no affection for you. For in this evil hour the family honour depends on *me*.'"

And this forceful lady wound up her harangue by sarcastically informing them that the Medici Palace was not built in order to be "a stable for

[1] Referring to the time when Pope Sixtus IV. had demanded the surrender to him of Lorenzo, and when the Florentines had refused to give him up.

[2] Referring to the illegality of his creation as cardinal. (p. 406).

mules." And promptly depart they did.[1] As an old chronicler, commenting on this episode, naïvely remarks: "The Lady Clarice had great power of tongue."

But apart from all question of her power of tongue, there is no doubt that Clarice was abundantly right. She saw plainly Clement's scheme, and how he was step by step carrying it out; she saw how, as a result, the whole temper of the people of Florence was changing towards her family; she knew what a tool her brother Lorenzo had been made in his hands; except for a girl of eight years old, she was herself the last legitimate representative of a line of ancestors who had been actuated by far different aims;[2] and she was enraged at seeing a policy so destructive to the honour of her house being pursued by one who, illegitimate himself, was scheming to make a second illegitimate scion of the family continue the same policy. And the speech which Leo X. had uttered concerning her was, had he known it, a prophetic one. For had she been in her brother's place, Clement would have found in her a formidable antagonist; she would have found means to make the course upon which he had embarked, and which after her death produced the destruction of the Republic, an impossible one; and the family honour would not have been dragged in the dust by an action which has been the principal

[1] Excepting Catherine, kept as a prisoner by the Republic (vol. ii. chap. xix.).

[2] Roscoe justly remarks:—"It was not by the continuance of, but by the departure from, the system of government which the earlier Medici had established, that the Florentine Republic sank under the degrading yoke of despotic power."

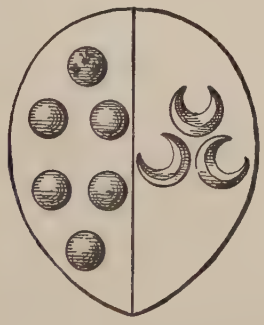
cause of all the condemnation bestowed upon their name.

By her conduct on this occasion — conduct apparently impelled by a determination to maintain the honour of her family by showing the Florentines that the "true Medici" had neither part nor lot with Clement and his scheme for the enslavement of Florence—Clarice forced the hesitating Signoria over the rubicon; for by this expulsion of Ippolito and Alessandro, with the Pope's representative, the die was cast, and it meant war to the knife with Clement.[1] And Clarice's bold endeavour to defend that honour of her family which she had truly said depended only on her, was in its own sphere not unworthy to be set beside Piero Capponi's action in that same room thirty-three years before, when he boldly spoke for the liberty of Florence against Charles VIII.

Clarice's character is a fine one. In every act of her life she showed herself a worthy descendant of those Medici who had gone before, and of whom she was so proud; and in this, the last recorded episode of her life, she showed it most. She died in the following year, on the 3rd May 1528, at the age of thirty-five, while the Republic was still in full power, and while her husband was keeping away from Florence, and endeavouring to remain friends both with the Republic and the Pope. She died at their lovely villa of *Le Selve*, on the heights overlooking the valley of the Arno, near Signa, and is buried in the Strozzi chapel

[1] Clarice's husband was much alarmed at her action; he apologised for it to the Signoria, and, by way of keeping friends with both sides, accompanied Ippolito to Pisa.

in Sta. Maria Novella, Florence. She had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. In his life of his brother Filippo, her brother-in-law, Lorenzo Strozzi, says that at her death her husband "cordially lamented her, and afflicted himself much"; and Filippo Strozzi in his will provided for a monument to be erected to her memory, "seeing that Clarice, my wife, deserves by her virtues to be honoured by me." And certainly Filippo Strozzi had every reason to honour one who was a most true, faithful, and able helpmeet to him, who throughout her life identified herself completely with his interests and plans, and took by far the larger share of the burden, and who not only worthily upheld the name of Medici, but also brought credit upon that of Strozzi.



The arms of Medici and Strozzi united.

CHAPTER XVII

GIULIO (CLEMENT VII.)

Born 1478. (*Pope* 1523-1534.) *Died* 1534.

(2) THE LAST SEVEN YEARS OF HIS PONTIFICATE

THAT Florence should revolt from him, and for a third time banish his family, is said to have been more intolerable to Clement VII.[1] than even the sack of Rome and all his other misfortunes. It was a severe blow to his long-cherished scheme. To his former plans there was now added the desire for vengeance. Meanwhile Florence was jubilant; she had reasserted her independence, and had good grounds for hoping to maintain it. Stronger as a state than Rome, the only thing she had to fear was the Pope's gaining allies; and in the condition to which Clement had brought his affairs this seemed highly improbable. The Emperor's animosity had been thoroughly roused, and he and the Pope seemed now too hopelessly estranged to be ever likely to reunite. Francis I. was Florence's ally; and besides this, had, in his contest with Charles, other work for his troops than to employ them on Clement's behalf in the latter's private quarrel with Florence.

[1] Plate XXXIII. In this portrait Clement wears a beard; this at the latter end of his pontificate he adopted to denote his sorrow at the many indignities he had to suffer.

POPE CLEMENT VII., AT THE AGE OF FIFTY-SIX.
By Bronzino.

Brogi] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

Henry VIII. was also Florence's ally, and incensed against Clement for his evasive replies in the matter of his divorce. Genoa, Venice, and Ferrara were all allied with Florence; while the smaller states were nearly all at enmity with Clement for one cause or another. Lastly, he himself was a fugitive, plundered of everything, and in a destitute condition.

But the Florentines, notwithstanding their long knowledge of him who has been called "the master of craft," had not fathomed the capabilities of that fertile brain for finding a way even through such a tangled web as this. Clement's main difficulty was that while he could not hope to regain power over Florence without the help of one or other of the two great antagonists, if he obtained the assistance of one the other would at once take the opposite side, and so neutralise matters. How to avoid this, therefore, became a problem to the solution of which he turned all his mental powers.

First, however, he had to make his peace with Charles, and "get the Emperor's Spanish, Flemish, and German bull-dogs, which had been so ruthlessly let loose upon him, made to let go from his throat." As the price of this release Charles imposed upon him the most humiliating terms, including the surrender of a large part of the Papal territories and the payment of a heavy fine; to all of which Clement had to submit.

In December 1527, soon after Clement reached Orvieto, Francis again declared war against Charles. Henry sided with Francis, hoping thereby to secure the latter's influence with the Pope in the matter

of his divorce. For Clement, now completely in the power of Charles, was secretly intriguing with Francis, and urging on this war, in the hope that it would liberate him from this state of bondage. With France and England the other allies against Charles were Venice, Genoa, Florence, and Ferrara.

Florence made a fatal mistake in the side she took in this war. Before it began the Emperor offered if she would side with him against Francis to secure her against the Pope; and Niccolò Capponi, who was Gonfaloniere, exerted all his influence to induce his countrymen to accept this offer, foreseeing that the Pope would eventually contrive to patch up matters with the Emperor, and that whenever this occurred Francis would prove a broken reed. But the Florentines insisted on clinging to the French alliance, and three years later had bitter reason to repent their mistake.[1]

As before, Italy was the principal battlefield. A French army under De Lautrec advanced against Charles's dominions in northern Italy; a second army, assisted by the Genoese fleet, attacked his kingdom of Naples; and for the next year and a half war raged throughout Italy. In October 1528 Clement, who had moved in June from Orvieto to Viterbo, was at last able to return to Rome. He was horror-stricken on seeing its condition, finding it ruined, half burnt, and the population diminished by one-half. Meanwhile, matters were going against the French. They lost the valuable alliance of Genoa; a few months afterwards the whole French army in southern

[1] *See* p. 469.

Italy had to capitulate; and lastly, their army in northern Italy suffered a severe defeat from Antonio de Leyva.[1] Exhausted by so many reverses, Francis was inclined to make peace; and to this end discussions regarding a treaty between the two antagonists went on for months at Cambrai, between Louise of Savoy on the part of Francis, and Margaret of Austria on the part of Charles.

The above position of affairs caused Clement to consider that the time was ripe for carrying out a great scheme, the details of which he had been elaborating for many months. Seldom, surely, has such vast machinery been set in motion to attain such a petty object. Europe was now to see the politics of France, England, Spain, Germany, and Italy all manipulated in order that Clement might compass his aim of regaining power over Florence and exalting a scion of his family to be despot over it. Accordingly, in June 1529, while the endless discussions between Louise and Margaret were still continuing at Cambrai, Clement proceeded to Spain, where Charles then was, and laid before him certain proposals for their combined action. The result of this was a secret compact concluded between Charles and himself at Barcelona towards the end of June, which soon had important results to all the countries then at war; though the arrangements made between Charles and Clement in this dubious plot were not allowed to transpire for some little time, but became apparent by degrees in the terms of the Treaty of Cambrai,

[1] De Lautrec had died of the plague in August 1528.

and in Charles's proceedings in Italy a few months later.

This compact was followed, in August 1529, by the conclusion of the Treaty of Cambrai[1] between Francis and Charles, in which Francis agreed to abandon his allies England, Venice, Ferrara, and Florence, to pay a ransom for his sons, to withdraw his troops from all Charles's territories, and to renounce all interference in future with affairs in Italy. The last item was the principal one, and was that which Clement had employed all his art to secure. Simultaneously with this treaty between Francis and Charles, Clement gave Henry some encouragement in the matter of his divorce, and the latter, anxious to obtain this, offered no remonstrance against the abandonment of the other allies by Francis, and himself followed the same course. This left of the original allies against Charles only Venice, Ferrara, and Florence, deserted by the rest.

The above treaty, combined with the thraldom in which he held the Pope, made Charles complete master of Italy. He now proceeded for the first time to that country (where his armies had been fighting for nearly eight years almost uninterruptedly) to settle its affairs, and to carry out the remaining provisions of the secret compact which had been made between himself and Clement. Reaching Genoa at the end of August he proceeded to Milan, where he reinstated Francesco Sforza[2] as Duke, and dictated terms of peace

[1] The Treaty of Cambrai was the first great settlement of the affairs of Europe. Being concluded by Margaret of Austria and Louise of Savoy, it is often called the "Ladies' League."

[2] The second son of Il Moro.

to Venice and Ferrara. In accordance with the secret compact at Barcelona, Charles treated Venice and Ferrara leniently, and only required from them the restitution to the Pope of the territories they had seized from him in 1527. This left Florence alone, bereft of all her allies; Genoa, France, England, Venice, and Ferrara had one by one been separated from her. Nor was Florence given any opportunity of making her peace with the Emperor in the same way as Venice and Ferrara had done; for this would have prevented that destruction of her republic which was the object of all these manœuvres on Clement's part. Moreover, another item in the Barcelona compact now transpired. For, as the price of his submission on all other points, Clement had stipulated that the Imperial army should be lent to him to enable him to crush Florence; to which Charles had agreed on Clement's pointing out that the eventual result would be to the Emperor's own advantage, since instead of a turbulent republic there would be substituted a ruler who would be a vassal of the Emperor. Thus had Clement in a course of two years' intricate diplomacy, gradually got the bundle of sticks separated, and also obtained the assistance against Florence of Charles's army (for which Clement agreed to pay), while Francis, under the terms of the Treaty of Cambrai, was debarred from interfering. The sum total was a triumph of that kind of diplomacy in which Clement delighted, and in which he excelled.

Accordingly, in the end of September 1529, the Imperial army was ordered to march upon

Florence; and in December (while the siege of Florence was proceeding) Clement and Charles met again, this time at Bologna, to perfect these arrangements, to add certain other clauses to the compact between them, and for Charles to be crowned by Clement with the Imperial crown.[1] This coronation took place on the 24th February 1530, and in April, Clement returned to Rome, having, in the further clauses to their compact added at Bologna, set on foot arrangements concerning a private and domestic scheme which he was elaborating as regards his own family. He had by this time determined to supplant Ippolito by Alessandro, and to give the rule of Florence, whenever that state should be subdued, to the latter; but he kept this carefully concealed from all except the Emperor until the time should come, and until he should find means to dispose of Ippolito in some manner which should prevent him from interfering with this plan.[2]

The terms of the secret compact to which Clement had induced Charles to agree at Barcelona, and which was thus finally completed between them at Bologna, were such as fully showed Clement's unscrupulous character; while in them we see that scheme at last taking shape upon which he had for so many years been bent as regards Florence, and which two years before had seemed as though it would have to be abandoned. The principal items were: (I.) that on Florence being isolated from her allies by the

[1] The Pope's entry into Bologna for this conference with the Emperor was made in great state, but it was remarked that there were none of the usual acclamations from the people.

[2] Chap. xviii.

arrangements settled upon as regarded France, England, Venice, and Ferrara, the Imperial army should be lent to Clement with which to attack and subdue her; (II.) that the independence of Florence should be abolished; (III.) that Alessandro (called by Clement, the son of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino) should be invested by the Emperor with the rule of Florence, holding that state as the Emperor's vassal;[1] and (IV.) that Margaret, a daughter of the Emperor, then nine years old, should be married to Alessandro as soon as she should be old enough. But the third and fourth articles were not allowed to transpire until more than a year later, Clement having private reasons for keeping them secret for the present. It may be imagined with what indignation the Florentines heard of this resolution to extinguish their beloved Republic, and with what determination they prepared to fight to the death against it. Regarding this whole matter Ranke's comment is as follows:—

"With astonishment did men behold him (Clement), after so many indignities, again connect himself with the Emperor. He so completely changed his policy that the very army by which the horrors of the sack of Rome had been perpetrated before his eyes, and himself held so long a captive, he now called to his assistance, and launched upon his native city."

[1] Even here Clement found scope for his favourite artifices. Charles V. only agreed to the Medici being restored to their former position, that position being, however, made hereditary; and the Emperor's Diploma accordingly only made Alessandro hereditary head of the Republic. Clement did not press for more than this at the time, but he found means later on to convert this into a formal abolition of the Republic, and the conversion of Alessandro into Duke of Florence (*see* p. 478).

The siege of Florence, Oct. 1529 to Aug. 1530.

Nevertheless Florence did not lose heart, though opposed to the united power of Pope and Emperor. Her field army was placed under Francesco Ferrucci, other troops being enrolled to form the garrison of the city. All round the walls of the city a space one mile wide was ruthlessly cleared so as to afford no cover to the enemy, every tree, including even those of vineyards and fruit gardens, being cut down, and every building, including even churches, being demolished, and notwithstanding the fact that some of these suburbs were almost like towns. The Venetian ambassador, Carlo Capello, writing to his government, comments on the widespread ruin thus caused, the many beautiful villas that had been burnt by their owners, and the "greatness of mind" displayed by the general willingness to suffer all these losses for the sake of liberty. One exception only was made, viz., the monastery of San Salvi,[1] on account of Andrea del Sarto's fresco of *The Last Supper*, "which art-loving Florence had not the heart to destroy."

On the 14th October 1529 the Imperial army, commanded by the Prince of Orange, appeared before Florence and occupied all the high ground on the southern side, at a distance of about a mile from the walls, from near Rusciano, on the east, round to Monte Oliveto, on the west,[2] while another equally large force occupied the country on the northern side of the city. Before the investment was complete Florence sent an embassy to Clement

[1] A populous suburb, all of which had to be destroyed, extended from the Porta alla Croce Beccaria almost up to this monastery, a distance of nearly half a mile.

[2] Plate XXXIV.

THE IMPERIAL ARMY BESIEGING FLORENCE (1529-1530).
Fresco by Vasari.

Alinari] [*Palazzo Vecchio.*

in Rome to appeal to his mercy;[1] but they met only with a cold refusal. Yet the troops whom he had gathered round Florence were the ferocious ruffians of many nationalities whom Bourbon had commanded; and Clement had hired them "with 30,000 florins and the promise of the plunder of Florence"; while we are told that even before this army left Lombardy the soldier's usual oath had become, "By the glorious sack of Florence." There was therefore no doubt as to what was the fate in store for Florence if this enemy got within her walls.

Florence's struggle in defence of her independence was worthy of her former history. She defended herself for ten months against all that the Imperial army could do, and at one time it looked as though she would win. Michelangelo laid aside his chisel and became his country's principal engineer,[2] in particular designing all the defences round San Miniato, the principal point of attack. Francesco Carducci was the Gonfaloniere, and although he had not the ability of his predecessor, Niccolò Capponi,[3] he was a worthy and

[1] Giulio on becoming Pope took the name of Clement, "to signify his merciful disposition."

[2] Michelangelo (not for the first time in his life) fled in a panic of fear a few days before the Imperial army reached Florence. He was outlawed and his property confiscated, but was urged to return; which he did about the end of November.

[3] Niccolò Capponi, who was Gonfaloniere from May 1527 until within a few months of the city being besieged, was worthy of the best days of Florence's history, and by far the ablest man that she possessed. He was the eldest son of Piero Capponi, Charles VIII.'s opponent. When the storm began to gather which, had his advice been followed, would have been prevented (p. 466), the citizens deprived him of his office, charged him with treason, and threatened to take his life; but he still continued to serve his country. He formed one of the embassy sent to Rome to plead with the Pope at the beginning of the siege, and died on the journey back to Florence, broken down at his country's misfortunes. Symonds says that the final blow which caused his death was the news, brought to him by Michelangelo, that Malatesta Baglioni was a traitor.

patriotic head of the Government. But the chief hero of the defence is Florence's noble general, Francesco Ferrucci, who well deserved the niche in Florence's temple of fame which he has gained. Keeping the field, and holding the neighbouring town of Empoli, he managed steadily to pour in thence supplies into Florence, again and again defeating the Imperial detachments with his numerically inferior forces, and hampering the Prince of Orange by the knowledge that there was an army in the field on his flank; and so well did he maintain his country's cause that it became at length evident that the Imperial army would never take Florence so long as Ferrucci remained unconquered.

It would have been well for Florence if her forces within the city had been commanded by a man of like character; but here she had made the fatal mistake of employing a foreigner, Malatesta Baglioni, one of that blood-stained family who had previously ruled Perugia; and this caused her defeat. He was a traitor from the very first, and had sold the cause he was engaged to defend. Gino Capponi states that before the siege began Baglioni received from the Pope a written document promising him the lordship of Perugia, confirming any terms which he might make with the Prince of Orange, and *conveying absolution for all crimes which he might commit during the siege of Florence.*[1] Nevertheless, though the garrison was so badly commanded, the Imperial army failed to gain any success; in the sorties and skirmishes which took place almost daily, and were fought

[1] Gino Capponi, iii. 241.

with great ferocity, the Florentines nearly always prevailed; and in December a well-arranged sortie of three thousand men under Stefano Colonna[1] was so successful that the besieging army would probably have been routed had it not been for the treachery of Baglioni, who sounded the retreat when Colonna's force were carrying all before them.

Month after month the struggle continued, and by degrees one after another of Florence's subject towns were captured, Volterra, Pistoia, Prato, Lastra, San Miniato al Tedesco, and others being successively taken by the Imperial army. But these losses did not daunt Ferrucci, who harassed the enemy continually, and even recaptured Volterra and San Miniato al Tedesco.

At length, in July 1530, the Prince of Orange, seeing that if he was ever to take Florence it was imperative first to defeat Ferrucci, desired to attack him with the greater part of his army, leaving only a weak force round the city; but he feared lest in his absence the garrison should sally out and defeat the force thus left behind. Baglioni, however, enabled him to effect his object, and to attack Ferrucci with an overwhelming force, by engaging not to make any such sortie during the Prince's absence. Thus assured, the latter marched away with a force more than double the strength of that commanded by Ferrucci, and attacked him. The battle between them decided the fate of Florence. It was fought at Gavinana, in the mountains above Pistoia, on the 3rd August 1530. After a severely contested battle the Imperial

[1] It was called an *incamiciata*, because Colonna's force all wore white shirts over their armour.

army won, chiefly because their brave opponents were nearly all destroyed. The two commanders, the Prince of Orange and Francesco Ferrucci,[1] were both killed. Thereupon Florence surrendered, on condition (agreed to on Clement's part[2]) that the ancient constitution should be preserved and the city ruled by the Signoria, but subject to the Emperor as the supreme power in Italy, Florence agreeing to pay an indemnity of 80,000 florins, while the Pope agreed to treat his countrymen "with affection and clemency, as he had always done."[3]

Nevertheless as soon as the city was in possession of the Pope these terms were entirely ignored. Francesco Carducci, the brave head of the Government during the siege, Niccolò de' Lapi, Fra Benedetto da Fojano (a monk who during the siege had encouraged the citizens by his sermons), and many others, Yriarte states to the number of a thousand, were put to death;[4] while many of the leading citizens were imprisoned. The abolition of the Republic and installation of Alessandro as Duke, Clement thought, even in the beaten condition of the Florentines, would be more safely carried

[1] Francesco Ferrucci's house is still to be seen in the Via Santo Spirito. A tablet on it recording his death at the battle of Gavinana says, "With him fell Florentine liberty." His devoted struggle in defence of his country has earned his statue a place in the Uffizi colonnade.

[2] "Although the submission of Florence had been nominally to the Emperor, it was practically to the Pope. It was the Pope, and not the Emperor who reconstructed the Florentine Government. Ferrante Gonzaga acted for the Emperor, and Baccio Valori for the Pope."—(Hyett.)

[3] Varchi.

[4] It is stated by Varchi that Fra Benedetto was sent to Rome, and there by the Pope's own orders cruelly starved to death in the castle of St Angelo.

out by successive steps.[1] So for a time he caused the government to be carried on by his representative, Baccio Valori, the Signoria being allowed to continue, but all power being vested in Valori, who lived in the Palazzo della Signoria surrounded by a strong body of the Imperial troops. After this arrangement had lasted ten months Clement took the second step by sending Alessandro from Rome to take Valori's place; he arrived on the 5th July 1531, and took up his abode in the Medici Palace.

But before the final step of declaring the Republic abolished and proclaiming Alessandro sole master of Florence could be ventured upon, a fortress was necessary to contain the troops to support this despotism. Accordingly for the present Alessandro was only called "head of the Republic," while arrangements were made for rapidly building a strong fortress (the present "Fortezza da Basso") at the centre of the northern wall of the city.[2] Clement VII.'s ancestors are often accused of "despotism"; but *they* had no need of a fortress; now, however, that a despotism is in reality about to be set up, a fortress to support it is felt to be a *sine qua non*; so much so that the proclamation of that despotic rule is even delayed until the fortress is ready. As soon as the latter was sufficiently completed to be occupied by the troops lent by the Emperor to support Alessandro's authority, the third and final step was taken; and on the 1st May

[1] Clement had also the private reason that to make the announcement as to Alessandro's future position before he had disposed of Ippolito would be inconvenient (p. 496).

[2] Most of the money for its construction was lent by Filippo Strozzi. It was predicted at the time that he would live to rue it (vol. ii. p. 240).

1532 Alessandro summoned the members of the Signoria to the Medici Palace, and read out to them the Emperor's order that the Signoria was abolished, the Republic ended, and he himself to be sole ruler of Florence. At the same time a similar proclamation was made from the *ringhiera* in front of the Palazzo della Signoria, the name of which was henceforth changed to Palazzo Vecchio. Alessandro also caused the great bell, "La Vacca," which hung in the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, and had summoned so many generations of Florentines to proclaim their will, to be thrown down and broken to pieces.[1] "The bell of the Council," says Davanzati in his contemporary diary, "was taken from us in order that we should no more hear the sweet sound of liberty."

Thus had Clement at last effected the completion of that project which he had assiduously pursued during twenty years. The further development of converting the ducal coronet into a crown was still unattained, but only one step more remained to reach it. The city, held in subjection by foreign troops, groaned in silence; but rage burnt under the surface at the manner in which its conquest had been effected, at the deliberate breach of the conditions under which it had surrendered,[2] and at the odious tyranny to which it now found itself subjected.

Michelangelo, when the city surrendered, fled for his life, and remained for some time in hiding.

[1] Varchi says it weighed 22,000 lbs.

[2] The name which has ever since been given to the villa at which the terms of the capitulation were signed is significant, the *Villa delle Bugie* (the villa of lies). It stands a short distance beyond the Torre del Gallo. It was an unfortunate name for the house to have at which Guicciardini afterwards wrote his celebrated history of Italy.

But his talents were too valuable to be lost, and Clement wanted him for the completion of the family monuments in the New Sacristy, planned in the time of Leo X. So he was pardoned, and given orders to proceed with the work. It may be imagined with what feelings he returned to the execution of such a task in the midst of the daily humiliations of Alessandro's rule. What memories of a bygone very different state of things in the happy days of his youth under Lorenzo the Magnificent, and what despair at the present degradation of Florence, oppressed his soul as he laboured at these monuments may be seen in his work; and there is no ground for the uncertainty which some have expressed as to what ideas Michelangelo meant to convey in these statues of *Day* and *Night*, *Evening* and *Dawn*, when they are studied in conjunction with the contemporary history and his own words.[1] The great sculptor worked at the task given him full of the bitterest feelings at the ruin of his country, at the "wrong," which had been done to her, and at the "dire disgrace" of such a rule as that of Alessandro; and the statues refer to the "day" which once had been, and the dark "night" which had now settled down upon Florence, one regarding which he despaired of any "dawn." Michelangelo left these monuments unfinished, not on account of any artistic reason (as some have fancied), but because, on Clement's death in 1534, before they

[1] Michelangelo, referring to the statue of *Night*, wrote:—

"Ah, glad am I to sleep in stone, while wrong
And dire disgrace rage unreproved near;
A happy chance to neither see nor hear;
Oh then wake me not! Hush! whisper low!"

were completed, he precipitately fled from Florence, being in fear of the tyrant Alessandro's hate when once the Pope was dead.

Contemporary historical events. 1530-1533.

Germany.—By the year 1530 Charles V. had triumphed in every direction. Spain was reduced to subjection; on France had been inflicted the greatest defeat of the century; all temporal power had been taken from the Pope; throughout Italy Charles's supremacy was complete; while his brother Ferdinand had gained the crowns of both Hungary and Bohemia. But in Germany the contest about religion threatened to produce serious civil war. In 1530 Charles assembled the Diet of the Empire at Augsburg to endeavour to find means of healing the breach; and at this assembly Melanchthon put forward a creed[1] which became a rallying point for the Lutheran party, now for the first time called "Protestant." Every effort was made to find terms of agreement between the rival parties in this assembly, and at one time Charles hoped this had been effected; but the Protestants would yield nothing from their side, and after much discussion they were out-voted, and the Diet passed a decree severely condemning their opinions. As a consequence the Protestant princes of Germany (secretly assisted by both Francis and Henry in order to embarrass the Emperor) formed for their mutual defence the League of Smalkalden. But the Turkish invasion of Hungary had now assumed formidable proportions, and to meet it

[1] It came to be called the Confession of Augsburg.

Charles, after great efforts, managed at the Diet of Ratisbon in July 1532 to arrange a truce on the religious question; whereupon the Protestant princes agreed to march with him against the Turks. Accordingly, in August 1532, Charles led a large army against Solyman, the Turkish Sultan, who, overawed by this great display of force, retreated precipitately without risking a battle, and evacuated Hungary and Croatia. Having thus rescued Hungary, the Emperor returned thence, and passed through Italy on his way to Spain.[1] He had no intention of going to Rome, and ordered Clement to meet him at Bologna, regardless of the rough and difficult journey in which this would involve the Pope, who dared not go by the main road which passed through Florence.[2] They met at Bologna in December 1532, when a second conference between them took place. At this meeting Clement was made to feel more than ever the galling yoke of his bondage to Charles; the latter knew that during his absence in Hungary Clement had been again making overtures to Francis, and intended to put a stop to all such procedure on his part. As a counterpoise, however, Clement had

[1] In this same year (1532) the conquest of Peru added still further to Charles's dominions.

[2] Clement never once ventured to enter Florence after the siege of 1530 and his repudiation of the terms on which the city surrendered, often proceeding by the most difficult routes in order to avoid that city. On this occasion the intense hardships which the Pope and the small band of cardinals whom he took with him suffered in this journey to Bologna by the rough road which passed through Perugia are vividly described by Dr Edmund Bonner (afterwards Bishop of London), who says that the journey was "wondrous painful to the Pope," and speaks of the various "unfortunable accidents," of the "evil lodging," and of the Pope having often to go on foot for several miles "by reason of the foulness and danger of the way."

prepared a scheme for the Emperor's discomfiture ;[1] while the compact which he had secretly formed with Francis (and which included specific proposals for an attack on Milan) did not prevent Clement's forming at this meeting an agreement with Charles to oppose Francis should the latter again endeavour to take Milan.

England.—For nearly six years Clement had by various artifices been keeping Henry VIII. at bay over the question of the divorce which he desired from his queen, Katharine of Arragon, the sister of Charles's mother, Joanna. Clement in his position with regard to Charles desired to retain the valuable aid of Henry as long as possible; at the same time, if forced to choose between the two, it was Charles whom he least dared to offend. And as the latter's power over him grew every year stronger, it became more and more certain that Clement would soon be forced to make that choice, and to break with Henry, however much he desired to avoid it. At last, in 1532, Henry would wait no longer.[2] He first tried to force Clement to his will by making the English Parliament pass an Act abolishing the payment of *First fruits* to the Pope; power being left in the King's hand to suspend the Act until it should be seen whether the Pope would meet his wishes. As this failed to produce the desired effect, Henry then

[1] Pages 484-486.

[2] The grounds on which Henry claimed that his marriage to Katharine had been illegal, and the arguments for and against it, do not concern this history, and are to be found in histories of England. Though spoken of as a divorce it was, technically speaking, not a divorce, but a decree of nullity, which Henry desired from the Pope.

endeavoured to force Clement to a decision between himself and Charles by forming an alliance with Francis against the Emperor. Charles's retort was the meeting to which he summoned Clement at Bologna in December 1532, at which he showed the Pope, with great plainness, that he must not dare to offend him, and must throw over Henry and refuse to agree to the divorce. But the more Charles made Clement feel his bondage to him, the more disinclined was the latter to lose any friendship which might sooner or later prove a help to him to get free from this yoke; therefore in secret he still did not despair of contriving by some means to avoid an absolute rupture with Henry. On the 25th January 1533 Henry was secretly married to Anne Boleyn. In February Clement, ignorant of this marriage, granted, at Henry's request, a bull making Thomas Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury. In May the question of whether or not Henry's marriage to Katharine of Arragon had been illegal was tried in the Archbishop's Court. And on the 23rd May, both houses of Convocation, several foreign universities, and many of the leading canonists of the day, having given the opinion that that marriage was void from the first, the Archbishop, acting with other bishops, annulled it, and three days later confirmed that with Anne Boleyn. But even this did not cause Clement as yet to break with Henry; Francis was Henry's close ally, and Clement hoped to obtain Francis's influence with Henry to persuade him against a breach with the Pope. Therefore though

Clement expostulated and threatened, the final thunderbolt of an excommunication was held in abeyance for more than a year, Clement hoping by persuasion to induce Henry to take back his wife when his fickle nature had had time to grow tired of Anne Boleyn.

Clement VII. 1533. Although Clement had succeeded in his scheme as regards Florence, he did not find his own position improved. The Emperor still held him bound in fetters, fetters which were stronger than ever since Francis had been shut out from interfering in the affairs of Italy. And while thus cut off from gaining assistance from Francis, Clement felt that he was now being forced by Charles to break with Henry also; when he would become more than ever the Emperor's bond-slave.

Clement therefore now executed his great and final *coup*. During the latter end of 1532 he managed secretly to arrange a compact with Francis which would bind the latter to him by an actual matrimonial alliance. This was nothing less than that the heiress of the Medici family, Catherine,[1] now fourteen, should be married to Francis's second son, Henry, Duke of Orleans, now about sixteen. The bait by which Clement won over Francis to this proposal was not only the enormous dower which Catherine would bring with her, but also an agreement on Clement's part to assist the French King to retake Milan.

[1] In the documents of the time she is constantly called the Pope's niece; whereas she was of course only his very distant cousin, he being the first cousin of her grandfather, Pietro.

Having secretly settled this with Francis, Clement proceeded in December 1532 to the meeting with Charles at Bologna; and there, in the course of their discussions, Clement mentioned to the Emperor the idea of such a marriage, pretending to ask his advice about it, and carefully concealing the fact that he had had any communications, on that or any other subject, with Francis. Charles, knowing that Francis was again planning to get hold of Milan, and being particularly anxious to prevent a friendship between him and Clement which might assist that endeavour, and never believing for a moment that Francis would agree to such a *mésalliance*, advised Clement to make the proposal, thinking that it would bring upon him a rebuff from Francis, which would produce ill-feeling between them. Whereupon to Charles's astonishment and disgust, the thing was promptly carried out. The Emperor having departed to Spain, Clement pushed on all the arrangements as fast as possible; and in October 1533 the marriage was performed by Clement himself, Francis also being present. As a part of the terms of this marriage it was secretly agreed that on Francis gaining possession of Milan with the Pope's assistance, that Duchy should be given to Henry, Catherine's husband, Clement hoping to gratify his ambition by seeing one of his family in power at Florence and the other at Milan. And Clement returned to Rome in December, feeling much secret satisfaction, not only at having achieved so advantageous a marriage for his family, but also at having outwitted Charles, who had held him so long in

chains, and who was left with no power of taking offence at this marriage, since he had been led by Clement into actually himself urging the latter to propose it.

Contemporary historical events. England, 1534.

But Clement had not a long time in which to enjoy feelings of satisfaction. Before five months were over there pressed upon him from another direction matters which made the last half-year of his life more disastrous than all that had preceded. For the cloud in the west now grew to greater dimensions than those of a mere personal quarrel with a king; and in the last six months of Clement's life events supervened in England which, in their momentous importance to the Papacy, threw all else into the background. For here was no case, as in Germany, of a certain number of individuals, however powerful, revolting from the Pope; but an entire national Church was casting off his supremacy, and a whole nation by its legislature enacting laws prohibiting obedience to his authority; while a king, instead of restraining these actions, was instigating them. And this nation also was that which had hitherto furnished the largest supplies for the support of the Papacy. If one or two more countries should act in the same manner, there would scarcely remain any Papacy to fight for.

In March 1534, both the Church and Parliament of England separately repudiated the supremacy of the Pope, the Convocation of the Church of England repudiating that supremacy as opposed to the principles of the Catholic

Church and an innovation which had not existed for the first six centuries of the Church's life,[1] and declaring that the Pope "hath no greater jurisdiction in this kingdom of England than any other foreign bishop," and the Parliament of England passing an Act which made appeals to the Pope high treason. Thus the repudiation by the Church of England of the Papal supremacy took place *before* the actual rupture between Henry and the Pope.[2] This latter followed four months later, when, in July 1534, the Pope pronounced a sentence of excommunication against Henry, unless he would take back Katharine of Arragon and put away Anne Boleyn; Clement thus still leaving a loophole, in the hope that a rupture between himself and Henry might even yet, at the eleventh hour, be avoided. Henry, however, refused to do this, whereupon the breach became complete.[3] Thus had Henry's personal quarrel with the Pope led to greater consequences than even a king's excommunication, and had enabled the Church of England to cast off that Papal supremacy which had been wrongfully imposed upon her for five centuries.

[1] During subsequent years the same test was applied to points of doctrine, and one by one all doctrines that would not bear the test of the first six centuries were gradually wiped off.

[2] Not in consequence of it, as nearly always stated.

[3] Clement VII. cannot be credited with any reason based on religious grounds for refusing to annul Henry's marriage to Katharine of Arragon. His action was throughout due to his fear of offending Charles V., a fear which the latter had increased by his threats when they met at Bologna in December 1532.

Clement VII. Sept. 1534. The sentence of excommunication against Henry VIII. was the last public act of Clement VII.'s life. He died less than two months afterwards, on the 25th September 1534 at the age of fifty-six.[1] His life ended in the midst of the gloom caused by the darkest of all the storms that had come upon the Papacy, and he died with his name execrated in every country, and unregretted by a single human being. It might have been thought that whatever the northern races might feel, at least in the capital city of that Papacy on behalf of which he had contended so strenuously some reverence might have been felt for him. But it was not so. In a letter to the Duke of Norfolk three weeks after the Pope's death, a Roman Catholic correspondent, Gregory da Casale, writes thus :—

"The joy in Rome was great. The most bitter hatred was felt for the dead Pope by every human being; a hatred which, unappeased even by his death, showed itself by repeated nightly attacks upon his tomb. Once it was absolutely destroyed, and the corpse was found transfixed with a sword. And had it not been for respect to the Cardinal de' Medici (Ippolito) the body would have been dragged through the city by a hook. At length an armed guard had to be set over the tomb, since it was every night broken and defiled with all sorts of filth."

Thus ended Clement VII. By setting before himself ignoble aims, and pursuing them with complete unscrupulousness, he did the greatest

[1] Strangely enough on the death of Clement VII. there appear to have been none of the usual rumours that death was due to poison.

harm to his own family, to Florence, to Italy, and to the Papacy.[1] He died leaving half Europe fallen away from the Papacy, Rome a ruined city, the name of his family hated where once it had been honoured, and "Italy, from Milan to Naples, a field of slaughter bathed in blood and tears."

At first sight Clement VII.'s pontificate is an enigma. He, one of the cleverest members of an exceptionally able family, who had been the guiding genius of the Papacy throughout Leo X.'s much praised reign, seems in his own pontificate to be perpetually engaged in the most unsuccessful schemes, and involved in the most grievous troubles, indignities, and losses, all without any apparent necessity, and with a result which has caused his pontificate to be considered the most disastrous on record.

The key, however, to this enigma, and the clue to the whole history of these eleven eventful years, is to be found in the reports of the Venetian ambassador at Rome, Antonio Suriano. The latter immediately after Clement's death set himself to show to his own Government that one single underlying motive was the cause of all Clement's actions, and the key to his otherwise inexplicable conduct. And that this all-dominating motive was *the endeavour to avoid the assembly of a General Council.* Suriano writes two long reports to his Government to prove this point, and draws out in detail the many things which Clement was willing

[1] "To him more than to any other man is due the success of the Reformation as a movement antagonistic to Rome." (*The Cambridge Modern History,* vol. ii.)

to endure for the sake of this one object; while he states that Clement's dread of a General Council amounted to nothing short of abject terror.

In his first report Suriano points out at great length the many occasions on which this exaggerated terror had impelled Clement to the most strange course of conduct, stating that "this overwhelming dread of the General Council, and this alone, induced the Pope to smother his resentment against the Emperor for the many mortifications received from him, and specially for the never-to-be-forgotten outrage of the sack of Rome. All was, if not forgiven, endured in silence, so long as there was any hope that by keeping Charles in good humour the Council might be staved off. And it was only when the Emperor definitively insisted on its assembly that Clement began again to lean towards Francis, in the hope that the latter would impede it." Suriano states that Clement "would not even suffer the word to be mentioned in his presence," and gives in detail the many cogent reasons he had for dreading it.[1]

In his second report the Venetian ambassador gives a masterly sketch of Clement's whole policy, and again points out that through all his manifold schemes there had been this one motive only.

"For this," says Suriano, "took place the conference with the Emperor at Bologna, and the league between His Holiness, His Majesty the Emperor, and Your Serene Highnesses; for this

[1] An incident cited by Ranke speaks volumes on this point, and shows how, not only Clement, but all interested in the vast Papal system, dreaded the very name of a General Council. The writer whom he quotes tells his correspondent, an Archbishop, "that the mere rumour of the probability of a General Council *had so depreciated the value of all offices in Rome that no money was to be got for them.*"

the cruel and shameful siege and conquest of Florence; for this the marriage between the Emperor's daughter, Margaret, and the infamous Alessandro; for this again the marriage between the 'Duchessina'[1] and the son of the King of France. . . . Again, for the same reason, when the arrest in Hungary of the Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici occasioned the Pope, on account of the indignity, such poignant grief that he wept over it, yet was it all passed over unnoticed. Nor could any circumstance avail to arouse Clement or cause him to quarrel with the Emperor, since His Holiness considered that the friendship of the Emperor secured him from the Council so much dreaded by him."

"For this same cause," pursues the ambassador, "although His Holiness had but little love for the Emperor, who ruled him and led him whithersoever he would, yet he was obliged against his will by necessity to consent to whatever the Emperor chose, without manifesting any resistance; and all this from fear of the Council. Therefore, considering this his painful position, and the slavery, as it may be called, in which the Emperor held him, and still more the danger of the Council, he began to show himself more accessible to the most Christian king (Francis I.). And hence the marriage of the Duchessina was planned. His Holiness's idea was that by this alliance of his niece[2] with the son of the King of France he should lay the foundation of two pillars of support for his family and his own affairs, especially in the so-much-dreaded matter

[1] Catherine was always called the "Duchessina" in Rome, in consequence of her father having been for a time Duke of Urbino; and Clement's use of the term when speaking of her shows that although he had pretended to acquiesce when Adrian VI. gave back that Duchy to its rightful Duke, he had not really done so.

[2] *See* p. 484 (footnote).

of the Council; in the hope that by these means some settlement of the religious questions might be attained, and at least the dreaded Council be avoided." And Suriano sums up by saying, "Your Lordships then may be assured that Clement used all possible means to avoid a Council, and the fear of it tormented the mind of His Holiness to such a degree that by reason of it he even lost the friendship of the Emperor, and of others, and finally his own life."

To which may be added the break with England; for Clement would never have allowed the breach with Henry to occur had it not been for the threat of the assembly of a General Council. which Charles V. intimated to him in the plainest terms should be the result of his agreeing to the divorce of his aunt.

The avenging of Canossa.

But there is something deeper to be seen here; though, strangely enough, it has passed without notice. If we look back through the long roll of the centuries we shall see that all this means in one word—*Retribution.* And so we see Canossa at last avenged, and after four centuries and a half, instead of the scene enacted there which burnt itself into the memory of Europe, we see the rôles reversed, and behold a successor of the Emperor Henry IV. making a successor of Pope Gregory VII. his abject slave, who trembled before him, and placed the Papal authority at his entire disposal, to be used only in accordance with his behests.

CHAPTER XVIII

IPPOLITO, ALESSANDRO, AND MARGARET

(1530-1537)

In following Clement VII.'s history to his death we have had to neglect for a time the younger members of the family, who during the last few years of his life were beginning to play their parts in the drama of the Medici story.

These present to us a group of four, two young men and two girls, three of them belonging to the family, while the fourth entered it by marriage. These occupy a considerable portion of the stage during the years 1530 to 1537; the two young men destined to meet with early deaths, the two girls destined to have long lives and to fill important places in history.[1] They are—Ippolito, the son of Giuliano (Duc de Nemours); Alessandro, whose dubious parentage has been already noticed; Catherine, the only child of Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino); and Margaret, a daughter of the Emperor Charles V., who at fifteen became the wife of Alessandro. Ippolito, as the eldest of the group, must be considered first; while Catherine, being so important a personage, must be dealt with separately.

[1] Ippolito and Alessandro both died at the age of twenty-six; Catherine lived to the age of seventy, and Margaret to the age of sixty-five.

Ippolito.

Ippolito,[1] the son of the justly esteemed Giuliano (Duc de Nemours), appeals to us both on account of his own attractive personality and the sadness of his history. Born in 1509,[2] and only seven years old when his father died, he was as a child taken charge of by his uncle, Pope Leo X., who was very fond of him, and watched carefully over his education, delighting in the ability which from an early age he displayed. But Leo died when Ippolito was only twelve years old.

We have seen how when he was fifteen he was sent from Rome by Pope Clement VII. to reside in Florence, made a member of the Government, and looked upon by all as intended, when old enough, to succeed to the rule of Florence which had been held by his father. During the next three years he, with Alessandro and the child Catherine, remained at Florence under Cardinal Passerini's charge, living in the Medici Palace, until, when Ippolito was eighteen, the third banishment of the family took place. Ippolito thereupon became for a time a wanderer, but when Pope Clement got back to Rome at the end of 1528, Ippolito also returned there.

Ippolito was by this time twenty years of age, handsome, courteous, good-natured, highly cultivated, possessed of much ability, and a universal favourite. Varchi says of him that he was "gifted with every accomplishment, affable and pleasant in his manner, and most liberal to all who excelled in war or letters or in any of

[1] Plate XXXV.

[2] His mother was a lady of Urbino, Pacifica Brandano.

the liberal arts." While another quality which the contemporary writers constantly speak of as possessed by him is that of "royal-mindedness."

Towards the end of the year 1529 Clement VII. began to form a plan of supplanting Ippolito, as the future ruler of Florence, by Alessandro. This was the more unpardonable in that Ippolito was eminently qualified for that position, while Alessandro, being uneducated, vicious, and universally detested, was as conspicuously unfit for it. Clement began privately to carry out this scheme when making the secret treaty with Charles V. at Bologna in December 1529, the third and fourth items of which treaty provided for this arrangement.[1] These intentions were, however, kept concealed from all concerned except the Emperor until Florence should first be subdued and Ippolito disposed of elsewhere.

In the spring of 1531, after the siege of Florence had ended, but while the Pope's intentions had not yet been allowed to transpire, Ippolito, Alessandro, and Catherine were all once more together in Rome, Ippolito being then twenty-two and Catherine twelve; and the idea of these two becoming united in marriage began by some to be entertained. But their common guardian, Pope Clement, had other plans for both of them; he intended to use Catherine as the bait by which to secure the alliance with the King of France which he desired as a defence against the thraldom of the Emperor; while he had reasons of his own for intending that Alessandro, and not Ippolito, should be Duke

[1] *See* chap. xvii. p. 471.

of Florence. So, while during the early part of 1531 affairs in Florence were left to be carried on by the provisional government under Valori, Clement completed his arrangements for making it equally impossible for Ippolito to become Duke of Florence and to marry Catherine.

Ippolito's natural bent was towards the profession of a soldier, and he disliked everything connected with the ecclesiastical life, and the ways and modes of thought of the ecclesiastics among whom the greater part of his boyhood and youth had been passed. Clement, however, who managed these young scions of the family like pawns on a chess-board, and had numberless ways of forcing them to conform to his will, now proceeded to carry out his object as regards Ippolito by conferring on him the dignity of a cardinal. Ippolito violently refused to accept the proposed honour, but eventually was forced to submit (though he never would wear the cardinal's dress when he could help it), and, to get him out of the way, was despatched on a political mission to Hungary. This done, Clement sent Alessandro to Florence, where in July he was declared head of the Republic; and ten months later, while Ippolito was still absent in Hungary, the Republic was abolished and Alessandro declared Duke of Florence (May 1532).

Alessandro.

Installed as absolute ruler of Florence at the age of twenty, Alessandro[1] showed all the inherent evil of his nature. There

[1] Plate XXXVI.

IPPOLITO DE' MEDICI, SON OF GIULIANO (DUC DE NEMOURS).
By Titian.

Alinari] *Pitti Gallery*

ALESSANDRO, COMMONLY CALLED "THE MOOR."
By Bronzino.

Alinari] [*Uffizi Gallery.*

is only one example in Florence of the plain ducal coronet;[1] it is to be seen surmounting Alessandro's name over the door leading into the Ognissanti cloisters in the Via Borgo Ognissanti. And sore reason had Florence to look with hatred on that sign of her subjugation. There followed the five most shameful years of her history. The exaltation of this foul and evil youth to a position of power absolutely uncontrolled showed mankind an example of what human nature is capable of under such conditions. His sycophantic admirer Ceccheregli, in his *Attione et Sentenze*, credits him with wit and wisdom, a fine sense of justice, and judgments which would have done honour to a Solomon. But if this was the case it was combined with other qualities which obliterated all such considerations. An historian of his own time calls him a "creature who would have disgraced even the deadliest epochs of Roman villainy"; while another describes him as "one whose excesses were as controllable by human reason as those of a beast of the forest." None dared offend him, or refuse him anything, lest he should murder those dearest to them. Trollope says:—

"The portraits of this wretched youth which hang on the walls of the Florentine gallery show the lowness of the type to which his organisation belonged. The small, contracted features, the low forehead, and mean expression, are altogether unlike any of the Medici race, in whom, whatever else they might be, there was always manifestation of

[1] As distinguished from the crown worn by the Grand Dukes.

intellectual power.[1] . . . . His life was one continued orgy. The ministers to his lawless will were ruffians chosen from among the vilest of mankind; . . . and these men were made, not only the ministers to, but the companions of, his pleasures; and the companions also of the young, the wealthy, and the beautiful among the aristocracy of Florence."

What wonder that disgust and indignation at being subjected to such a rule was the prevailing temper of Florence; or that after three years an appeal should have been made to the Emperor to remove so infamous a vassal. The wonder rather is that any city should have endured such a monster so long, and should not have deprived him of life within the first year instead of the sixth. The experience was a more bitter one to Florence than it would have been to other cities. Others had had tyrannies to endure; Florence had never known the rule of a tyrant.[2] The experience killed her very soul for a time.[3]

Margaret.

In the spring of 1533, when Alessandro had been for about a year Duke of Florence, the fourth member of the group, Margaret, then a girl of twelve, fair and pretty, and engaged to Alessandro in accordance with

[1] Lorenzino in his defence (*see* p. 509) denied that *any* Medici blood flowed in Alessandro's veins; he stated that though Clement VII. believed the latter to be his son, it was not so.

[2] Except her short one year's experience under Walter de Brienne two hundred years before.

[3] It was while this orgy of crime was going on in the world outside that, in the quiet monastery of San Marco, Sogliano, a pupil of Lorenzo di Credi, was painting in the refectory his well-known fresco, which bears on it the date 1536.

Clement's compact with the Emperor, passed through Florence on her way to Naples. Born in Flanders in 1521, she had been brought up by her two aunts, Margaret of Austria and Maria of Hungary, and was now sent by her father the Emperor's orders to reside at Naples until the time should come for her marriage to Alessandro. Catherine, two years older, who was then in Florence preparatory to her departure for Marseilles for her own marriage, rode out to meet her at the Medici villa of Cafaggiolo, in the valley of the Mugello, on the road from Faenza. And thence, on the 16th April 1533, these two girls, so different in appearance, and destined to have such very different histories, together rode to Florence. Margaret remained for a few days to be shown by Catherine the principal sights of the city, and then continued her journey.

For the next three years Margaret remained at Naples, and as Alessandro's enormities yearly grew more notorious there began to be doubts, especially after the death of Pope Clement, whether her marriage would take place.

"So iniquitous did such a marriage seem, even in that age, that the *fuori usciti* did not believe in the projected marriage, because they did not believe that the princess could be given to a man so infamous."[1]

However, Charles V. evidently thought otherwise, and even Pope Clement's death did not cause him to alter his intention to carry out the marriage which had been settled upon between them.

[1] Napier.

Ippolito. Although the way he had been treated caused a great change in Ippolito, a permanent sadness coming over a disposition which had before been full of brightness, we do not hear of his showing any resentment. He developed a great liking for the Hungarians and for Hungary, and while in that country was fond of wearing the Hungarian dress; though on one occasion while there he was made prisoner under a mistake, a matter over which Pope Clement suffered much humiliation. On his return from Hungary Ippolito took up his abode at Bologna, and shortly afterwards complied with the Pope's request that he should accompany him to Marseilles to be present at Catherine's marriage. At Bologna Ippolito lived in great style, and an incident connected with his life there gives an example of his character. Clement VII., thinking the number of retainers maintained by Ippolito excessive, remonstrated with him: whereupon Ippolito replied: "No, I do not maintain them because I have need of their services, but because they have need of mine." Ippolito had all the family taste for learning; he wrote various poems, and translated the second book of the *Æneid* into Italian blank verse, a work which has been highly praised and often reprinted.

In 1534, Pope Clement being ill, Ippolito returned to Rome, and was with the Pope when he died in September: on which occasion we hear of his protecting the latter's body from insult; while it was he who thereupon commenced the construction of the tombs in St Maria sopra Minerva to the two Medici Popes, Leo X. and Clement VII.

Perhaps we shall not be wrong in considering that Ippolito showed the nobility of his character in nothing more strongly than in never exhibiting any malice towards Pope Clement for the way in which the latter had cheated him and ruined his life. Yet he evidently felt it deeply, for Varchi tells us—

"When he understood that Pope Clement had decided that Alessandro was to be made the heir to the riches and greatness of the house of Medici, and not himself, a great change took place in him. He was seized with immense anger and grief, as it seemed to him that being older, a nearer relation to the Pope, and better endowed by nature, so rich an inheritance and so brilliant a marriage[1] should rather be his; either not knowing, or refusing to believe, the secret rumours that Alessandro was the son of Clement."

It is peculiar to notice how it is assumed as a matter of course that nearness of relationship *to the Pope*, and not right of primogeniture (as a grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent), is that which should constitute Ippolito's stronger claim.

Contemporary historical events. 1534-1535.

On Clement VII.'s death Alessandro Farnese was, on the 11th October 1534, elected Pope in a conclave which only lasted one hour. He took the name of Paul III., and within three days after his election he ordered a committee to assemble to draw up a scheme for the reformation of the Church, and to consider the time, place, and mode for the assembly of a General Council. In politics also the new

[1] Varchi here refers to the marriage of Alessandro to the Emperor's daughter, which it was now known had been arranged and that it would take place ere long; though it did not actually do so until after Ippolito's death.

Pope adopted a totally different course from that of his predecessor, endeavouring to assuage the animosity between Charles and Francis,[1] and maintaining a position of neutrality between them. The above course of action on the part of the Pope changed the entire political situation; while it enabled the Emperor to turn his attention to the affairs of Germany, and to resisting the formidable encroachments of the Turks.

In May 1535 Charles V. sailed with a great fleet from Barcelona to attack the Barbary pirates, who under their commander Chaireddin Barbarossa had established themselves in Algiers and Tunis, and ravaged the coasts of Spain and Italy. The pirates were defeated, and Charles took their capital, Tunis, and in August returned in triumph to Sicily.

Ippolito.

In June 1535, Pope Clement being dead, and Alessandro having in the three years he had been in power so outraged the Florentines that he had driven a large number of them into voluntary exile, these *fuorusciti* determined to send an embassy to the Emperor Charles V., to appeal to him against the atrocities of his vassal, and to petition for his removal. The *fuorusciti*[2] had always been a recognised party in Florentine politics, as whichever party was in power caused a number of the opposite party to quit Florence, either voluntarily for their own safety, or by being

[1] As a means of bringing about peace between them, the Pope urged Charles to consent to give Milan to Francis's second son, Henry; but Charles refused "in view of the precarious health of the Dauphin," since, if the latter died, this would result in Milan becoming permanently a possession of the French crown.

[2] Signifying "those who have gone out."

exiled. But under Alessandro's evil tyranny they had come to muster unusually strong.

They selected Ippolito as their ambassador to lay their petition before the Emperor, the latter being then at Tunis, on his expedition against the Barbary pirates. Ippolito, who was then at Rome, started upon this journey and got as far as Itri, near Gaeta, between Rome and Naples; but, while waiting there for a vessel in which to embark for Tunis, he was poisoned; and the proof was overwhelming that it was done by Alessandro. The agent employed was one Giovanni Andrea of Borgo San Sepolcro; and besides the universal opinion, and the testimony of other historians, Varchi gives proof which is practically conclusive that he was employed to commit the crime by Alessandro.

Thus died at the age of twenty-six the accomplished and deservedly popular Ippolito, put out of life (like so many others) by the detestable youth whom Clement VII. had placed in power in Florence. The assassin, Giovanni Andrea, did not long survive; after effecting his escape from Ippolito's servants, who in their rage would have torn him in pieces, he fled to Florence, and lived for some months in Alessandro's palace, protected by the latter. Thence after a time he went to his own town of Borgo San Sepolcro; but there the people, in an outburst of popular indignation at his crime in killing one so universally admired as Ippolito, seized him and stoned him to death.

As we look at Titian's portrait[1] of this handsome and accomplished grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent we see his whole character and history

[1] Plate XXXV. It was probably painted in Bologna about 1533.

laid bare before us. Though a cardinal, he will not be painted in that hated dress, but wears his favourite Hungarian costume, and the sword which he would have liked to bear as a soldier. His chivalrous spirit, high temper, quick intelligence, and that quality of "royal mindedness" which those around saw in him, are well brought out by the painter. The picture was painted after that "great change in him" of which Varchi speaks, and his face may well have that look of permanent sadness since, too wholly in the power of his crafty relative the Pope to resist after the thing was done, he had by various subterfuges had his whole life spoilt.

Titian was at this time at the height of his fame, the greatest portrait painter in Europe, and much in request at all the most splendid courts. He had passed from the patronage of the Duke of Mantua to that of the Emperor Charles V., whose admiration for him was exemplified in his speech (on picking up Titian's brush from the ground), declaring that "a Titian might well be served by Cæsar." In order to give a high relief to the head Titian was fond of using, as in this instance, a black background in his portraits. Ruskin, speaking of them, says:—"Both for what they present, and the manner of their presentation, Titian's portraits are among the artistic marvels of the world."

Contemporary historical events. 1536.

In January 1536 war again broke out between Charles and Francis, while the latter brought another powerful adversary into their conflict by concluding an alliance with the Turkish Sultan,

Solyman. The French overran the whole of Savoy, and took Turin. Charles, then resting at Naples after his North African expedition, remained there from December 1535 to March 1536. He then travelled northwards to oppose the French, and in passing through Rome made arrangements with Paul III. for the assembly of a Council of the Church as soon as a state of peace should be obtained; though it was nine years before the Council[1] was able to assemble. Having arrived in northern Italy, Charles repulsed the French, and then invaded Provence, but in September was forced to retire again to Italy, Savoy remaining the prize of France, and the territories of its Duke becoming reduced to the single town of Nice.

Alessandro.

Whether or not Alessandro's enormities had become so pronounced before Pope Clement's death in 1534, they evidently had fully done so by June 1535, when Ippolito's mission took place. It therefore immeasurably lowers our esteem of the Emperor Charles V. (who must have been fully aware, both of the abominable state of things which had caused Ippolito to be sent, and of the circumstances of his death) to find that in April 1536, on his way northwards from Rome, he stayed in Florence at the Medici Palace with Alessandro. And on the 19th June in the same year Alessandro was married in San Lorenzo to the Emperor's daughter Margaret, then fifteen, the last iniquitous step in the compact made by Clement VII. with Charles V. at Bologna in 1530.

[1] Known as the Council of Trent.

But all was of no avail. Six months later, on the night of the 5th January 1537, came the end of Alessandro's vicious life at the age of twenty-six, and in the way in which it was bound to come sooner or later. He was assassinated by his young relative and boon companion Lorenzino,[1] of the younger branch of the Medici family, then aged twenty-two, assisted by a hired assassin, Scoronconcolo, in a room in Lorenzino's house adjoining the Medici Palace; to which house Alessandro had gone late at night imagining that he would meet there a lady of whom he was enamoured, and who was none other than Lorenzino's own sister Laudomia, the young widow of Alemanno Salviati, who, we are told, "was as virtuous as she was beautiful," and who had previously rejected the Duke's odious attentions with scorn.[2] Lorenzino, however, was merely deluding him, and, instead of his sister, brought in the assassin Scoronconcolo, and together they put an end to the detestable being who had for five years outraged Florence.[3]

Lorenzino was a strange youth. He was the eldest of the four children of Pier Francesco (the younger)[4] and Maria Soderini, and had decided ability and character, while it is specially recorded

[1] So called on account of his small, slight figure. His proper name was Lorenzo.

[2] It was formerly asserted that the lady whom Alessandro expected to meet at Lorenzino's house was Caterina de' Ginori, Lorenzino's aunt; but M. Gautier, in his recent life of Lorenzino, contradicts this, and shows that it was Laudomia.

[3] Lorenzino afterwards wrote the full details of the murder, and these may be read in full in the accounts of this affair given by Varchi and other writers. Varchi's account was received by him from Lorenzino's own lips.

[4] *See* Genealogical Table (Appendix I.).

of him that he had much culture and literary talent. But he is said to have acted at times as though seized with temporary madness. On one occasion, when in Rome, he, although a great admirer of antiquities, in a sudden freak knocked off the heads of several fine statues of the Emperor Hadrian; at which act Pope Clement was furious, threatened to hang him, and banished him from Rome. He was seventeen when Alessandro was made Duke of Florence, and from that time he became the latter's constant associate, and companion in all his vicious courses. His devoted mother, the widowed Maria Soderini, did her utmost to lead her eldest son into better ways, and to get him to break off his connection with Alessandro, but unsuccessfully; a failure accounted for by Lorenzino in his defence by his statement that his conduct had had a deliberate object (*see* below). His sister Laudomia was a celebrated beauty of the time; her portrait, painted by Bronzino, is to be seen in the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Florence.[1]

Leaving Alessandro's body where it lay, Lorenzino forthwith took horse and fled from Florence, riding hard through the night for Bologna.[2] Next morning the Duke's servants, finding him absent, suspected foul play. Search was secretly made for him, and at evening they discovered his body lying in the room in Lorenzino's house. His death was kept secret, and the

[1] Plate XXXVII. Her portrait shows an example of the peculiar fashion then in vogue of shaving the front part of the hair in order to give a high forehead and the appearance of intellectuality then desired by all ladies. The portrait of Eleonora di Toledo (Plate LVIII.) gives another example of the same.

[2] He had previously obtained an order for post horses.

body hurriedly conveyed by night into the little church of San Giovannino, close to the Medici Palace; there it was prepared for burial, and on the following night was carried by a few servants with great secrecy to the church of San Lorenzo, and without any religious service was hurriedly placed in the sarcophagus containing the remains of Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino), neither wife, relative, nor friend of any sort being present at this dishonoured interment.

After halting a few hours in Bologna Lorenzino fled on to Venice, where was then living Filippo Strozzi, who was at this time the leading man among the *fuorusciti*. When on reaching Venice Lorenzino burst into Strozzi's room and related what he had done, Strozzi embraced him, calling him the deliverer of his country, and "the Florentine Brutus." Strozzi's delight was so great that he declared that his two sons should marry Lorenzino's two sisters; which was in a short time carried out, Piero Strozzi marrying Laudomia, and Roberto Strozzi marrying Maddalena.

Lorenzino's act has been the subject of much controversy; by some he has been considered the liberator of his country from an intolerable state of things for which there was no other remedy, since appeals to the Emperor had proved useless; by others he has been called a traitor and a regicide.[1] Possibly it would be necessary for us to

[1] This latter view was in after years much in vogue, being considerably assisted by the fact that it was the one which Cosimo I. (and his descendants, the Grand Dukes of Tuscany) desired should be held, Lorenzino being descended from the eldest son of Pier Francesco the elder, while Cosimo was only descended from the latter's second son (*see* vol. ii. p. 251). Professor Del Lungo calls the former "the unfortunate Lorenzino."

LAUDOMIA DE' MEDICI.
By Bronzino.

Alinari] [*Galleria delle Belle Arti*

have to live under such a tyranny as Alessandro's before we could form a just opinion on the point. Be that as it may, praises were lavished upon Lorenzino from every side, and both the Florentines in exile throughout Italy and those within the city compared him to all the heroes of patriotism in history. There are only three possible motives for his act, personal ambition, the liberation of his country, and the protection of his family from insult. None have considered that he was moved by the first of these motives; he was, it is true, the rightful heir to the position in which Clement VII. had placed Alessandro, but he never seemed to care for such a position, and was entirely without any family influence to enable him to profit by Alessandro's death, almost his only male relative being an unknown and equally powerless youth of seventeen.[1] In the detailed defence of his act which he drew up[2] he stated that his whole course of action had been a deliberate plan in order to free his country from a monstrous tyranny which had become insupportable; and this account of the matter is believed by historians to be the true one, even though it involves the possession by Lorenzino of an amount of determination beyond his years. But while the above motive on public grounds was that put forward by Lorenzino, he had a no less powerful private one, even though he, naturally enough, did not wish to state it; for in the circumstances under which Florence was at that time, this youth of twenty-two had certainly no other way by

[1] Cosimo, the son of Giovanni delle Bande Nere.
[2] *Apologia di Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici.*

which he could protect the honour of his sister.[1]

As a mark of ignominy Cosimo I., on succeeding to the rule of Florence,[2] caused Lorenzino's house to be entirely destroyed. It has in recent times often been declared that Cosimo, on pulling down the house, opened in the place where it had stood a narrow street or alley connecting the Via Larga (now Via Cavour) with the Via Ginori, and called it the *Strada del Traditore.* But this is disproved by the very rare work, in the State Archives, the *Ricerche alle case di Firenze, Anno 1561*, a record, very carefully compiled, of every house in Florence at that date, carried out block by block, from corner to corner of the four streets enclosing each block. This shows with great exactness, first, that there was no street or alley near the Medici Palace running from the Via Larga to the Via Ginori, and, second, that in 1561 the house of Lorenzino had been, not merely spoilt, but entirely destroyed. This record (in regard to the Quartiere San Giovanni), starting from the corner at the intersection of the Via de' Gori with the Via Larga, mentions first "the house of Lorenzo the Magnificent" (the Medici Palace); and then says that the next house is a ruin, "that which formerly belonged to Lorenzino de' Medici, already entirely destroyed (*rovinato*)"; while it mentions no street or alley running from the Via Larga to the Via Ginori. This proves

[1] The view which has taken pleasure in stigmatising him as "Lorenzaccio," and holding him up to general execration, is not one which is endorsed by that of the Florentines of his own time. It is the growth of a later age; and had, as has been shown, a definite motive.

[2] Vol. ii. chap. xxiv.

that there was then, at all events, no *Strada del Traditore*; while it also disposes of another theory which has been held, viz., that Lorenzino's house was that which is now No. 5 Via Cavour. The former site of Lorenzino's house is, in fact, covered by the northern portion of the Medici Palace which was added by the Riccardi family when they bought the palace in 1659, part of which addition has an empty space left on the first floor,[1] in accordance with one of the conditions of the sale, which in giving permission to the Riccardi family to build their proposed extension of the palace on this site laid down the condition that such a space should be left above the ground floor at this spot, as a memorial of the murder of Alessandro, which had taken place in a room similarly situated.

Until the year 1875, though it was always known that Alessandro's body had been interred in the tomb of Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino), it was a debated question which of the two tombs in the New Sacristy was that of Lorenzo and which that of his uncle Giuliano. In that year, however, the Italian Government authorised an investigation to settle the point, and the sarcophagus over which sits the figure called *Il Pensieroso* was opened, in the presence of a representative of the Government and various literary men interested.

"It proved to contain," says the account, "two corpses, which turned to dust as soon as the air was admitted, but not before the figure of Alessandro had been perfectly recognised, both by its mulatto type and by the marks of the

[1] This space left on the first floor at the northern end of the building is visible at the extreme right of the picture, Plate V.

wounds, especially those in the face, which he had received from Lorenzino and the hired assassin Scoronconcolo."

Another account denies the turning into dust, and says that there were signs of embalmment, that the two bodies were lying head to foot, and that Lorenzo's was clothed in the usual black garment, but Alessandro's in an embroidered shirt. Mr Charles Heath Wilson, who was present, remarked that one of the cheek-bones of the latter body bore traces of a stab, and that this corroborated Varchi's account of the murder.

Margaret.

When the tragedy of Alessandro's murder occurred, Margaret, not knowing what might be the consequences to herself of the removal of a husband so justly detested by every soul in Florence, fled at once to the Fortezza, which was held by the troops of her father, the Emperor. Thence she departed first to Prato, and then to Pisa, and after a short time, by the Emperor's orders, removed to Spain. There, eight years later, she was at the age of twenty-four forced to marry a boy of thirteen, Ottavio Farnese, grandson of Pope Paul III., and became in after life a very capable and celebrated woman, who as Margaret of Parma[1] was in 1559 made Regent of the Netherlands by her half-brother, Philip II., and ruled that country well under the most difficult circumstances for eight years. In 1567 she insisted on resigning that rule, because she would not be a party to the inhuman measures which Philip

[1] Plate XXXVIII. The portrait was taken when she was Regent of the Netherlands, at about the age of thirty-eight.

MARGARET, DAUGHTER OF THE EMPEROR CHARLES V., WIFE OF ALESSANDRO (MARGARET OF PARMA).

By Coello.

Hanfstaengl] [*Brussels Gallery.*

had sent the Duke of Alva to the Netherlands to carry out, her last act being to write to Philip begging him to temper justice with mercy. Amidst general expressions of regret, she retired from the Netherlands to her home in Parma, where she died in 1586.

Margaret was the last mistress of the family palace in the Via Larga. Contessina de' Bardi, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Clarice Orsini, Alfonsina Orsini, Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne, and Margaret herself, had each in turn ruled as its mistress. And when the last of them fled from it in terror, this palace, where so many momentous events in the history of Florence had taken place, ceased to be occupied by the head of the family;[1] giving place to a palace, grander indeed in size, but unable to compete with its predecessor in the magnitude of the associations which the latter gathers round it.

On Alessandro's death Clement VII.'s scheme for keeping the rule of Florence in the elder branch came abruptly to an end, since all of that branch except Catherine were dead; and the succession passed to the younger branch, as it should properly have done on the death of Leo X. All the falseness, injustice, baseness, and treachery employed in order to seat Alessandro on a throne to which he had no right had produced nothing whatever so far as keeping the younger branch out of power in Florence was concerned. Entirely defeating its own aim, Clement's action had only rendered it more easy for them, both to gain that power, and to make it a despotism.

[1] Except for a short time by Cosimo I.; *see* vol. ii. p. 245.

But before we proceed to take up the history of this younger branch, we have still to follow that of the third member of this group of four young people, that daughter of Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino), and great-granddaughter of Lorenzo the Magnificent, with whom Cosimo's branch ended, and who had the longest and most important history of any of the family.

END OF VOL. I.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX III

VALUE OF THE GOLD FLORIN, THE DUCAT, THE SCUDO, AND THE SILVER FLORIN.

The gold florin weighed 72 grains of gold, and represented 12 francs. Allowing for the depreciation in the precious metals, this in our present money would be equal to about £5.

The ducat of Venice (called also the zecchin) represented 8 francs; equal in our present money to about £3 : 4 : 0.

The scudo represented 7 francs; equal in our present money to about £2 : 16 : 0.

The silver florin represented 4 francs; equal in our present money to about £1 : 12 : 0.

APPENDIX IV

DATES OF HEADSHIP OF THE FAMILY, AND PERIODS OF RULE OVER FLORENCE OR TUSCANY.

NAME.	DATE.	REMARKS.
Giovanni di Bicci . .	1400—1428	
Cosimo Pater Patriae .	1428—1464	Rule of Florence, 1434—1464.
Piero il Gottoso . .	1464—1469	Rule of Florence.
Lorenzo the Magnificent .	1469—1492	Do.
Pietro the Unfortunate .	1492—1494	Do.
Interregnum . . .	1494—1512	
Giuliano (Duc de Nemours)	1512—1513	Rule of Florence.
Lorenzo (Duke of Urbino)	1513—1519	Do.
Giulio (as representing the family) . . .	1519—1527	Rule of Florence.
Third banishment of the Medici . . .	1527—1530	
Alessandro . . .	1531—1537	Duke of Florence.
Cosimo I. . . .	1537—1574	Duke of Florence, 1537—1569. Grand Duke of Tuscany, 1569—1574.
Francis I. . . .	1574—1587	Grand Duke of Tuscany.
Ferdinand I. . . .	1587—1609	Do.
Cosimo II. . . .	1609—1620	Do.
Ferdinand II. . . .	1620—1670	Do
Cosimo III. . . .	1670—1723	Do.
Giovanni Gastone . .	1723—1737	Last Medici Grand Duke.
Death of Anna Maria Ludovica . . .	1743	Last of the Medici.

APPENDIX V

THE GREAT IN ART.

RELATIVE DATES OF THE PRINCIPAL PAINTERS, SCULPTORS, AND ARCHITECTS FROM NICCOLÒ PISANO TO MURILLO.

NAME.	ARCHITECT, SCULPTOR, OR PAINTER.	CITY.	BORN.	Date of attaining age of 20 [1]	DIED.	REMARKS.
THE DAWN.						[1] The age of twenty inserted as showing earliest probable date of each beginning to produce independent work.
Niccolò Pisano	Sculptor	Pisa	1210(?)	1230	1278	
Arnolfo di Cambio	Architect	Florence	1240	1260	1311	
Duccio	Painter	Siena	1258	1278	1319	
Dante	Poet	Florence	1265	1285	1321	
Giotto	Architect, Sculptor, and Painter	Florence	1276	1296	1337	
Petrarch	Scholar and Poet	Florence	1304	1324	1374	
Orcagna	Architect, Sculptor, and Painter	Florence	1308	1328	1368	
The Giotteschi						Taddeo Gaddi. Simone Martini. Agnolo Gaddi. Lorenzo il Monaco. Lippo Memmi. Starnina.
THE FULL FLOWER.						
Ghiberti	Sculptor	Florence	1378	1398	1455	
Brunelleschi	Architect	Florence	1379	1399	1446	
Donatello	Sculptor	Florence	1386	1406	1466	
Masaccio	Painter	Florence	1401	1421	1428	
Fra Angelico	Painter	Florence	1387	1407	1455	
Michelozzo	Architect	Florence	1391	1411	1472	
Luca della Robbia	Sculptor	Florence	1400	1420	1482	
Alberti	Architect	Florence	1405	1425	1472	[2] Actually belonged to Borgo San Sepolcro, one of Florence's subject towns.
Piero della Francesca	Painter	Florence[2]	1406	1426	1492	
Filippo Lippi	Painter	Florence	1412	1432	1469	
Benozzo Gozzoli	Painter	Florence	1420	1440	1497	
Giovanni Bellini	Painter	Venice	1426	1446	1516	Rise of other Italian schools to compete with Florence.
Mantegna	Painter	Padua	1431	1451	1506	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	

Verrocchio	Sculptor & Painter	Florence	1435	1455	1488
Bramante	Architect	Urbino	1444	1464	1514
Botticelli	Painter	Florence	1444	1464	1510
Perugino	Painter	Perugia	1446	1466	1524
Ghirlandajo	Painter	Florence	1449	1469	1494
Francia	Painter	Bologna	1450	1470	1517
Leonardo da Vinci	Painter, Sculptor, and Architect	Florence	1452	1472	1519
Pinturicchio	Painter	Perugia	1454	1474	1513
Filippino Lippi	Painter	Florence	1457	1477	1504
Lorenzo di Credi	Painter	Florence	1459	1479	1537
Carpaccio	Painter	Venice	1470	1490	1519
Luini	Painter	Milan	1475	1495	1533
Fra Bartolommeo	Painter	Florence	1475	1495	1517
Michelangelo	Sculptor, Painter, and Architect	Florence	1475	1495	1564
Giorgione	Painter	Venice	1477	1497	1510
Titian	Painter	Venice	1477	1497	1576
Palma Vecchio	Painter	Venice	1480	1500	1528
Sodoma	Painter	Siena	1480	1500	1549
Raphael	Painter	Urbino	1483	1503	1520
Andrea del Sarto	Painter	Florence	1486	1506	1531
The Decline.					
Sebastiano del Piombo	Painter	Rome	1485	1505	1547
Coreggio	Painter	Parma	1494	1514	1534
Tintoretto	Painter	Venice	1518	1538	1594
Paolo Veronese	Painter	Venice	1528	1548	1588
Guido Reni	Painter	Bologna	1574	1594	1642
Domenichino	Painter	Bologna	1581	1601	1641
Guercino	Painter	Bologna	1590	1610	1666
Rise of Dutch and Spanish Schools.					
Rubens	Painter	Antwerp	1577	1597	1640
Van Dyck	Painter	Antwerp	1599	1619	1641
Velazquez	Painter	Madrid	1599	1619	1660
Rembrandt	Painter	Antwerp	1606	1626	1669
Murillo	Painter	Madrid	1617	1637	1682

APPENDIX VI

QUESTION WHETHER THE *ADORATION OF THE MAGI*, BY BOTTICELLI, NOW IN THE UFFIZI GALLERY, AND CONTAINING A REPRESENTATION OF THREE GENERATIONS OF THE MEDICI FAMILY, WAS PAINTED, OR NOT, FOR PIERO IL GOTTOSO.

This picture is one of the *family group pictures* common at the time, when it was invariably the custom to choose some religious subject as the means by which to portray the members of the family concerned.

The first mention that we have of the picture is that by Vasari, who, writing about 1550, states that it then stood "between the doors" of the church of Sta. Maria Novella; *i.e.* between the two entrance doors in the west wall of the church. It is to be observed that Vasari makes no mention of any person named Lami in the matter.

Mr H. P. Horne, in his recent work on Botticelli, maintains that this picture (always held to have been painted for Piero il Gottoso) was painted, about the year 1477, for a certain "Giovanni Lami." His grounds for this opinion are that the *Sepolcrario*, a list of the tombs, altars, and pictures in Sta. Maria Novella, purporting to be a correct copy made in 1729 from an earlier list made in 1617, speaks of a picture which is probably[1] this one, as being "over the altar anciently erected by Giovanni Lami, a citizen of Florence." Mr Horne mentions that the picture was subsequently acquired by Fabio Mondragone, and was eventually bought "by one of the Grand Dukes in the seventeenth century," and placed in the villa of Poggio Imperiale; from whence it came to the Uffizi Gallery. He states that he has failed to discover who Giovanni Lami

[1] Though not certainly so, Botticelli having painted others on the same subject.

was, and that "none of his name appear to have attained the honours of the Republic."

These facts are, of course, not new; they will be found detailed in *The Dominican Church of Sta. Maria Novella*, by the Rev. J. Wood Brown.[1] What is new is the deduction from them that because the picture was in 1617 over the altar mentioned, therefore it was painted for Giovanni Lami, and not for any member of the Medici family.

Now the first thing to be noticed is that there is a very long gap in time between 1467 (when, as explained in the text,[2] this picture was apparently painted) and 1617, the date when the *Sepolcrario* states that the picture was over the altar erected by Giovanni Lami, a gap of a hundred and fifty years. And that during this period (the most disturbed epoch in Florentine history) the picture may have changed hands several times, in the same manner as it did subsequently.

But more than this. During the earlier part of the above period, an event occurred which prevents the erection of any theory upon the fact that at a subsequent date this picture was over a particular altar. For in the year 1494 the Medici were driven out of Florence, and all the works of art belonging to them were confiscated, and were freely bought and sold during the years that followed. So that it was perfectly possible, at any time during the hundred and twenty-three years between 1494 and 1617, for this unknown Giovanni Lami to have bought the picture and set it up over the altar he had erected; or for his descendants to have done so, for the document quoted does not even say that he himself placed it there, but merely that in 1617 it was over the altar that he had erected.

Finally, the principal feature of the picture is, as is well known, and as Mr Horne also admits, a group of portraits (or representations) of three generations of the Medici family. The theory, therefore, that it was painted for a certain Giovanni Lami requires that there should be, at any rate, some connection (however remote) between this person and the Medici. Yet there is not the faintest trace that he was connected with them in any way whatever. There is no evidence of their ever having had a man of that name among their adherents. Nor was he even a leading member of one of the various Florentine Guilds;

[1] Published in 1902.

[2] Chap. vi. p. 175, and pp. 177-178.

nor a sufficiently notable man in Florence for any record of him to have been preserved. A contention that such a person would have had painted for him an important picture of this kind, containing, not portraits of his own family, but of the Medici family, would in any case require the support of strong evidence. Yet instead of this, there is, as has been shown, no evidence of any kind. While the bare fact that, a hundred and fifty years afterwards, a picture which it was perfectly possible for him or his descendants to have purchased was over an altar erected by him proves nothing at all.

When to the above considerations is added the fact, not only that the traditional opinion handed down among the Florentines has always been that this picture was painted for Piero il Gottoso to be placed by him in the church of Sta. Maria Novella as a votive offering in connection with an important episode in his life, but also that the painting contains, as I have shown,[1] remarkable internal evidence in corroboration of that statement, the proof appears to be conclusive that this, and not the theory in question, is the true history of this picture.

[1] Chap. vi. pp. 176-178.

APPENDIX VII

QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE *BIRTH OF VENUS* AND THE *PRIMAVERA* (OR SPRING), BY BOTTICELLI, WERE PAINTED, OR NOT, FOR LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.

These two celebrated pictures Mr H. P. Horne, in his recent work on Botticelli, maintains were painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco (1463-1507) of the younger branch, and not for Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449-1492), as hitherto held.

It has always been known that these two pictures were in the villa of Castello in the time of Cosimo I. (1537-1574), and were part of his property. Vasari, writing about 1550, in speaking of Botticelli's pictures and the way they had become dispersed, says: — "Among which, at the present time, there are at Castello, a seat of the Duke Cosimo of Florence, two allegorical pictures; the one of the Birth of Venus, . . . and the other, also a Venus, whom the Graces adorn with flowers, signifying the Spring." The villa of Castello (unlike the other Medici villas) had never been owned by the elder branch, but had always belonged to the younger branch.

Of the two pictures Mr Horne considers that the *Spring* was painted in 1478 (which agrees with the historical tradition), but thinks that the *Birth of Venus* was probably painted some seven years later.[1] All, however, which is material to the point under discussion is that it is admitted that both the pictures were painted during the lifetime of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and within a few years after the tournament of 1475.[2]

[1] Without denying this, it may be noted that various high authorities in technical criticism consider the *Birth of Venus* to have been painted at about the same date as the *Spring*.

[2] *See* chap. viii. p. 228 (footnote).

In support of the theory that they were painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco, Mr Horne says as follows:—"The earliest notice of these two pictures is that of the "'Anonimo Gaddiano,' writing in 1542-1548, who quotes "some earlier writer who states—'At Castello, in the house "'of Signor Giovanni de' Medici (Giovanni delle Bande "'Nere[1]), he (Botticelli) painted several pictures which are "'among the most beautiful works that he made.' The only "other original notice is that of Vasari, who in the first "edition of the *Lives* says: 'Among which, at the present "'time . . . (the extract already quoted) . . . signifying the "'Spring.' These two notices, when taken together, show "that the *Spring* and the *Birth of Venus* were already at "Castello whilst it was in possession of Giovanni delle "Bande Nere, between the years 1503 and 1526, long before "that branch of the house of Medici succeeded to the duchy "and possessions of the elder branch."

But these two notices do not show this in the very least; for all that is said by the first notice is that in the house of Signor Giovanni de' Medici[2] Botticelli painted "several pictures which are among the most beautiful works that he made." It is plain that there is nothing in this statement which supplies any evidence whatever regarding the two pictures in question, since the writer does not specify any particular pictures; so that we are thrown back simply on the second notice, that of Vasari, which shows only that the two pictures were at Castello about the year 1550. Moreover, even supposing it were shown that these pictures were there in 1503-1526, we are still as far as ever from any evidence that they were painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco.

Mr Horne argues that these two pictures must have been painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco because the anonymous writer quoted states that certain beautiful pictures were painted by Botticelli for the villa of Castello; because the "Signor Giovanni de' Medici" mentioned must, he considers, be Giovanni delle Bande Nere (indicating a date between 1503 and 1526); because the two pictures were undoubtedly there in 1550; and because they are not mentioned in the inventory of the property of Lorenzo the Magnificent, taken after his death in 1492. Adding that "Lorenzo di Pier

[1] The words in brackets are Mr Horne's, not those of the anonymous writer.

[2] Regarding who is referred to by this name, *see* (7) below.

Francesco bought the villa of Castello in 1477",[1] that, "On the death of Lorenzo di Pier Francesco in 1503 (*sic*) the villa of Castello fell to the share of his nephew, Giovanni delle Bande Nere"; and that, "To these premises there is but one conclusion, that the *Spring* and the *Birth of Venus* were originally painted at the instance of Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici for the decoration of the villa of Castello."

(1) Now, first, we have seen that the anonymous writer upon whose statement this theory is based says nothing which supplies any evidence about these pictures at all.

(2) At the date when Mr Horne considers that the *Spring* was painted (1478), Lorenzo di Pier Francesco was *a boy of fifteen*; his brother, Giovanni di Pier Francesco, being only eleven.[2]

(3) The villa of Castello, though it may perhaps originally have been owned by the two brothers conjointly, was not (at all events, in the period 1496-1507) the property of Lorenzo di Pier Francesco, but of his brother, Giovanni di Pier Francesco. This is fully shown by the celebrated lawsuit[3] which occurred when Lorenzo, after his brother's death in 1498, attempted to seize upon the villa, and was compelled by the verdict to make it over to its rightful owner, his brother's son, then a child, afterwards known as Giovanni delle Bande Nere. And we see the fact that the villa belonged, not to Lorenzo di Pier Francesco, but to Giovanni di Pier Francesco, corroborated by the words of the anonymous writer himself, who in naming the villa calls it "Castello, the house of Signor Giovanni de' Medici."[4]

(4) Irrespective, however, of the point as to which of the two brothers owned this villa, were there even any evidence that these two pictures were at Castello at the date mentioned in the theory (1503), or at any other date during the entire period 1494-1550, this would in no way show that they were not painted for Lorenzo the Magnificent; for their being there would be fully accounted for by the

[1] Vasari, who (placed as he was in regard to Cosimo I.) would scarcely go wrong on such a point as that, says that the villa was built by Lorenzo's *father*, Pier Francesco. In 1477 Lorenzo was only a boy of fourteen.

[2] Moreover, the picture may have been painted a year earlier.

[3] Vol. ii. chap. xxii. pp. 210-211.

[4] *See* (7) below.

fact that in 1494 the whole of the artistic possessions which had belonged to Lorenzo the Magnificent were dispersed,[1] and were for sale in Florence to any one who would buy them. It is only evidence that these pictures were at Castello in the period 1478-1492 that would show that they were not painted for Lorenzo the Magnificent.

(5) Lorenzo di Pier Francesco did not die in 1503; nor did the villa of Castello at his death in 1507 fall to the share of his nephew, Giovanni delle Bande Nere; for, as previously noted, it already belonged to the latter, being inherited from his father, Giovanni di Pier Francesco. Moreover, any property which Lorenzo di Pier Francesco had to leave went at his death to his own son, Pier Francesco the younger, and passed at the latter's death to his son, Lorenzino. Similarly the property of Giovanni di Pier Francesco went at his death to his son, Giovanni delle Bande Nere, and passed at the latter's death to his son, Cosimo, afterwards Cosimo I. The very fact, therefore, that a picture were found belonging at any date to Giovanni delle Bande Nere, or to his son Cosimo, would of itself show that it had not belonged to Lorenzo di Pier Francesco.

(6) Since the statement of the anonymous writer quoted by Mr Horne supplies, as shown, no evidence in regard to these two pictures, there remains solely the point that they are not mentioned in the inventory of the property of Lorenzo the Magnificent. But the bare fact that two pictures are not found noted in the inventory of the vast amount of various kinds of property, furniture, works of art, etc., possessed by Lorenzo the Magnificent (which inventory, moreover, may very possibly not have been completed by the time that the Medici property was, two years after his death, dispersed), is not by itself sufficient evidence upon which to base an entire theory of this kind. Various causes might be imagined to account for no entry being found of two pictures in a list, more than four hundred years old, of such a voluminous and heterogeneous mass of property; especially as in the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent these pictures were not held of any particular importance compared with many other valuable curios and works of other kinds of art which he possessed. There are other, no less important, pictures possessed by Lorenzo which are also not found mentioned in this inventory. For instance, the late M. Eugène Müntz states that the first

[1] Chap. x. pp. 319-321.

mention of the celebrated picture of *Pallas and the Centaur* is not until 1516. (E. Müntz, *Les Collections des Medicis*, p. 86.)

(7) Mr Horne has been completely misled by assuming that where the writer quoted by the "Anonimo Gaddiano" speaks of "Signor Giovanni de' Medici," this means Giovanni delle Bande Nere. This has led him to suppose that these two pictures were at Castello in the period 1503-1526, and to deduce therefrom the theory that they had been painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco. The anonymous writer, however, *is not referring to Giovanni delle Bande Nere at all, but to his father, Giovanni di Pier Francesco*, whom he correctly styles "Signor Giovanni de' Medici," he being the only Giovanni in the family from 1478 to 1498, except the little son[1] of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Even, however, had the anonymous writer meant Giovanni delle Bande Nere, it would not assist the theory under discussion, for the reasons mentioned in (1), (2), (4), and (5).[2]

From what I have shown it is evident—

(i) That at the date when the *Spring*[3] was, as Mr Horne says, undoubtedly painted, the two brothers, Lorenzo di Pier Francesco and Giovanni di Pier Francesco, were far too young for it to have been painted for either of them.

(ii) That there is no evidence that these two pictures were ever at Castello before the time of Cosimo I. And that even were there any evidence of their being there at *any* time between 1494 and 1550, this would not show that they were not painted for Lorenzo the Magnificent.

[1] Born in 1476.

[2] The statement made by the anonymous writer, while supplying no evidence in regard to the two pictures, *Spring* and the *Birth of Venus*, is very interesting in another way; for it shows that at some time or other Botticelli painted for Giovanni di Pier Francesco certain "beautiful pictures" in the villa of Castello. We know that Botticelli painted frescoes in several other villas round Florence, notably in the Tornabuoni villa, and the expression, "he painted in the house of," raises the question whether the pictures referred to by the anonymous writer were not frescoes; since it is unlikely that he would use that expression in speaking of pictures painted in Botticelli's studio and placed in the villa of Castello. Although that villa was partially destroyed in the time of the siege of 1530, still it is just possible that search made there, similar to that made by Signor Lemmi in the Tornabuoni villa, might yield similar fruits (*see* chap. ix. p. 287, footnote).

[3] Even if not also the *Birth of Venus*.

(iii) That had they ever belonged to Giovanni delle Bande Nere this would of itself suffice to show that they had not belonged to Lorenzo di Pier Francesco.

(iv) That the only writer earlier than Vasari who mentions anything at all about pictures being painted at Castello states that such were painted, not for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco, but for Giovanni di Pier Francesco.

It is not safe with Botticelli to expect *portraits* in all cases, and to argue that because a figure does not bear the face of a particular person this proves that it is not intended to represent that person. Botticelli makes a marked difference between an isolated portrait of a single individual and group pictures containing representations of several individuals or the various members of a family. In such pictures he, as often as not, considers it quite sufficient to indicate the person referred to by some accessory, either in the dress or elsewhere.[1] If, for instance, he desired to execute a picture for the giver of a tournament, complimenting the latter's brother or son as the victor in the combat, Botticelli would think it sufficient to paint a picture of "Mars," and show by accessories in the picture that he alluded to that person's brother or son. And similarly in the case of the lady who had been the chief beauty on the occasion. He might, in delineating her as "Venus," give her portrait to his figure of Venus; but he would think it equally satisfactory (and perhaps even a more delicate compliment) to denote who was meant by means of accessories in the picture. A well-known example is the picture of *Pallas and the Centaur*, in which Botticelli has so definitely indicated Lorenzo the Magnificent in the figure of Pallas by placing Lorenzo's private crest all over the dress, that even to this day every one knows that the figure represents Lorenzo. Such indications, with others now unknown to us, were amply sufficient for the Florentines of Botticelli's day, giving them full knowledge of what persons were represented. And this knowledge, handed down to their descendants, gives weight to the opinion of the Florentines of the present day as to what persons are represented in their national pictures.

Therefore, to reject the figure of "Mercury" in the picture of *Spring* as not representing Giuliano de' Medici,

[1] Other painters of the time often do the same, notably, for instance, Benozzo Gozzoli.

or of "Venus" in the same picture as not representing Simonetta de' Vespucci, because the faces do not appear to be portraits of those persons, is to base an argument on premises which Botticelli's practice will not support. This, when joined to the error of supposing that where "Signor Giovanni de' Medici" is spoken of it means Giovanni delle Bande Nere, added to that of supposing that the latter inherited the villa of Castello from Lorenzo di Pier Francesco, has had the effect of originating a theory regarding the two pictures in question which is contradicted by the very authority quoted in support of it.

Nor must the testimony which the two pictures themselves furnish be left entirely out of account. While the *Spring* contains, as has been shown,[1] considerable allusion throughout to Lorenzo the Magnificent and his achievements, the connection with him of the other picture, the *Birth of Venus*, is even more directly evidenced. For this picture is, admittedly, entirely inspired by Politian's poem[2] written on the tournament of 1475; so much so, that the picture is (as has often been pointed out, notably by Mr Fry) a simple representation pictorially of the poet's words.[3] Now that poem was written, not for the little-known and insignificant Lorenzo di Pier Francesco (who also at the time this tournament took place was a boy of twelve years old), *but in honour of Lorenzo the Magnificent*, the giver of the tournament. This fact would alone practically suffice to prove that the picture was painted for no other than Lorenzo the Magnificent. A picture representing pictorially a poem written in honour of the head of the State on a special occasion could scarcely have been painted for any one else but the man in whose honour the poem was written.

The theory that these two pictures were painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco not only involves his having commissioned Botticelli to paint the chief of the two pictures when he (Lorenzo) was a boy of fourteen or fifteen, and demands that the same Lorenzo when dying should instead of leaving his property to his own son, have left it to a nephew with whom he and his son were at enmity, and engaged up to the time of that death in a bitterly contested lawsuit, but it also runs counter to the whole of the knowledge of the Florentines about their country

[1] Chap. viii. pp. 226-228. [2] The *Giostra*.
[3] Chap. viii. p. 225.

and countrymen. It also involves (in view of the special character of these two pictures) that the comparatively insignificant Lorenzo di Pier Francesco,[1] who never throughout his life displayed any talent or distinguished himself in any way (except as having been proved in a celebrated lawsuit to have embezzled his nephew's property), should have possessed an influence and importance in the Florence of his day analogous to that possessed by Lorenzo the Magnificent. It has been noted in the text that Lorenzo di Pier Francesco is the only male member of both branches of the Medici family of whom no portrait appears ever to have been painted; a fact which could scarcely have been the case had he been even to a limited extent a patron of Art.

Lastly, the very straitened circumstances indicated by the letter of Maria Salviati,[2] written in 1530 on behalf of herself and her son Cosimo, make it extremely unlikely that Cosimo at that time possessed two pictures of the value of those in question.

There is, in fact, no evidence whatever that these two pictures were the property of any of the younger branch of the Medici family, either in the time of Lorenzo di Pier Francesco and his brother, or in that of the next generation in the person of Giovanni delle Bande Nere, or in the third generation until some years after Cosimo became Duke of Florence. It is most probable that they had, since 1494, been in various hands, and that Cosimo bought them when he became enriched by his marriage with Eleonora di Toledo, and when he was, as we know, repurchasing the objects of art which had belonged to the elder branch wherever he could find them.[3]

Irrespective, however, of these considerations, it has been shown that these two pictures (for whomsoever painted) could not have been painted for Lorenzo di Pier Francesco; while, on the other hand, ample grounds have been given[4] for the belief that the opinion always held by the Florentines that they were painted for Lorenzo the Magnificent is the correct one.

[1] Vol. ii. pp. 173-175.
[2] Vol. ii. p. 232-233.
[3] Vol. ii. p. 259.
[4] Page 531, and chap. viii. pp. 224-228.

APPENDIX VIII

LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT TO HIS SON GIOVANNI IN ROME.[1]

". . . The first thing, therefore, that I would impress upon you is that you ought to be grateful to God, remembering always that it is not through *your* merits, or *your* wisdom, that you have gained this dignity, but through His favour, and to show your thankfulness by a holy, exemplary, and chaste life; and that you are so much the more bound to do this by having already in your youth shown conduct which gives promise of such fruits. It would be very disgraceful, and contrary both to your duty and my expectations of you, if in a time when others are seeking to acquire a more reasonable and better mode of life, you should forget the good precepts in which you have been brought up. It is necessary, therefore, that you should strive to lighten the burden of the rank you bear by a regular life, and by persevering in those studies suitable to your profession. During the past year it gave me much comfort to notice that, without being urged by any one, you had often of your own accord gone to Confession and received the Holy Communion. I do not believe that there is a better way of keeping in the grace of God than by accustoming yourself to such ways, and persevering in them. This seems to me the best and most useful advice that in the first place I can give you.

"I know well that in going to reside in Rome, which is the sink of all iniquity,[2] you will find it all the more hard to follow the advice I have given you above. Because, not only does example have great influence over us, but also there will not be wanting those who will endeavour to corrupt and incite you to vice. Also, because, as you are able to understand, your promotion to the cardinalate at your early

[1] *See* chap. ix. p. 291.

[2] *Sentina di tutti i mali.*

age arouses much envy, and those who have not been able to prevent your receiving that honour will strive subtly to diminish it, by bringing your life into ill-repute, and leading you to slide into the same ditch into which they have themselves fallen, confident of success in their attempt owing to your youth. You ought all the more firmly to oppose these difficulties, since one sees at this time less virtue amongst the members of the Sacred College. Though I remember to have seen in that College many who were learned and good men, of holy lives. Therefore, it is better to follow these examples; by doing which you will be all the more known and esteemed in proportion as the conditions of the others distinguish you from them. It is at the same time necessary that you should avoid, like Scylla or Charybdis, a name for hypocrisy, as much as that of infamy; and that you should practise moderation, striving in fact to avoid all which offends in this way, and in conversation not affecting either austerity or undue seriousness. These are things which in time you will understand, and will perform better, in my opinion, than I am able to explain them to you.

"You are well aware how important is the example which as a Cardinal you ought to show, and that the world would be a better one if all the Cardinals were what they ought to be; because in that case there would always be a good Pope; upon which depends, as it were, the tranquillity of all Christendom. Strive, therefore, yourself to be such that if all the rest were to do the same we should be able to anticipate this universal boon. . . . . .

"You are the youngest Cardinal, not only in the Sacred College, but that there has ever been hitherto. Therefore, it is necessary that when you take part in any assembly of them you should be the most unassuming, and the most humble, not causing others to wait for you either in the Chapel, or the Consistory, or on deputations. You will soon get to know which of them are the more, and which the less, moral; with the latter avoid conversing with intimacy, not merely on account of the matter itself, but also on that of public opinion; but on general topics converse with all. In your entertainments I should urge that they should be under, rather than beyond, the prevailing custom; and I should prefer a fine house and a well-ordered household to one extravagant and ostentatious. Try to live with regularity, reducing your expenses gradually within those limits which at the first may not be possible. Silk and jewels are seldom

suitable to those in your station. Better some refinement in the collection of antique things and beautiful books, and a house learned and well regulated rather than grand. Invite others to your house more often than you accept invitations to theirs; not, however, too often. Eat plain food, and take plenty of exercise; for (for want of it) those of your cloth quickly fall into many infirmities for which there is no cure. The position of a Cardinal is both secure and lofty; whence it arises that those who gain it become negligent, thinking that they have sufficiently attained their object, and can maintain it with little trouble; and this often does serious harm to the life and character; so that it is necessary that you should bear this carefully in mind. Confide in others too little rather than too much. One rule above all I urge you to observe with all your diligence; and that is *to rise early in the morning*. For this not only will help greatly your health, but also it enables one to arrange and expedite all the business of the day; and in the station which you now occupy, having to say your offices, to study, to give audience, etc., you will find this practice most useful. One other thing also is highly necessary for one in your position (especially in the beginning of your career), namely, to think over the previous evening all that you have to do on the following day, in order that nothing may come upon you unprepared.

"With regard to your speaking in the Consistory, I consider that it will be most becoming for you at present, and the most suitable course at your age, to refer whatever is proposed to you to His Holiness, giving as your reason your youth and small experience. It may reasonably be expected that you will be petitioned to intercede with His Holiness for many special objects. Try, however, in these early days to do so as seldom as you can, and not to worry him constantly in this way; for the Pope's disposition is to pay the more heed to those who only rarely solicit him in this manner. This you should observe, in order not to give him just cause for offence with you; and so to go before him with pleasant things, or, when it falls out, to make such an intercession with humility and modesty, will be pleasing to him. Farewell."[1]

[1] Translated from the original letter as given in Roscoe's *Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent*, pp. 467-470.

APPENDIX IX

NOTE ON BOTTICELLI'S PORTRAIT OF PIETRO THE UNFORTUNATE, MAINTAINED BY A RECENT THEORY TO BE A PORTRAIT OF GIOVANNI, SON OF COSIMO.[1]

THAT this picture of a man of about five-and-twenty should be supposed to represent Giovanni, the son of Cosimo Pater Patriae, is almost more illogical than the theory formerly held that it represented Pico della Mirandola.

(1) We have, first, the fact that Botticelli did not begin painting on his own account until he was twenty (1464); at which date Giovanni was already dead, having died the year before, not as a man of twenty-five, but at the age of forty-two.

(2) Even supposing that many years afterwards Botticelli had been commissioned (by some one unknown) to paint a portrait of Giovanni from memory, he would certainly have painted him *as he remembered him*, *i.e.*, as a man of forty-two, and not as he was when Botticelli was only two years old.

(3) Again, no shadow of a reason has been adduced by those who have put forward the theory in question, as to why Giovanni should hold up in both hands and present to the spectator a medallion of Cosimo Pater Patriae, and in a manner which causes the action to be the prominent feature of the picture.[2] The mere fact that he was Cosimo's son does not in any way account for such an action, and when put forward as the sole reason which can be adduced, that argument only draws attention to the failure of the theory on the very point on which it is required to be specially strong.

[1] *Sandro Botticelli*, by H. P. Horne, p. 27.

[2] So much so that the picture has often received the name of "The Medallist."

(4) Supposing this picture to be a portrait of Giovanni at the age of twenty-five, then that means in the year 1446. Now the title of "Pater Patriae" was not given to Cosimo until eighteen years later than that, and *not until after Giovanni was dead.* So that these words round the medallion would represent a complete anachronism if the portrait were that of Giovanni, and an anachronism which a painter like Botticelli would certainly never have perpetrated.

(5) Lastly, in the year 1446 when Giovanni was twenty-five Cosimo was in the full prime of his health and vigour, having been governing Florence for about twelve years, and having another eighteen years of life before him. What possible reason could there be for Giovanni at *that* period in their respective lives to hold up in this peculiarly marked manner a medallion of his father depicting him as an old man, and with the words "Cosimo Pater Patriae" inscribed round it? To merely mention the point is sufficient to show the erroneous character of the theory.

The various errors in regard to this picture appear all to have originated from the supposition that the portrait of Pietro the Unfortunate painted by Bronzino for Cosimo I., about the year 1555, is a correct likeness of him. It is singular that whereas Botticelli knew Pietro well, while Bronzino never saw him, and was painting a picture supposed to represent him at least fifty years after Pietro's death, the latter painter, instead of the former, should have been taken as the authority for what Pietro was like, and that Botticelli's picture should have been held not to be a portrait of Pietro because it does not agree with that by Bronzino; with the result that it has been thought necessary to find some one else of whom Botticelli's picture might be declared to be a portrait.

It has entirely escaped notice that there was a special reason why we should expect Bronzino's portrait to give a different representation of Pietro. Bronzino was the court painter of Cosimo I., upon whom all his advancement depended. Cosimo I. was the grandson of Giovanni di Pier Francesco, the younger of the two brothers (Lorenzo and Giovanni), who not only nourished the most bitter enmity against Pietro,[1] but also felt that their entire justification

[1] Chap. x. pp. 311 and 316.

for their conduct lay in representing him as in every way foolish and incapable. It would be almost impossible that Cosimo I., the grandson of the younger and more active of the two chief enemies of Pietro, should look upon the latter in any other light than did his grandfather. To Cosimo I. it came with all the force, both of family tradition and of expediency, to hold that Pietro, ejected from Florence by Cosimo's grandfather, was justly treated by the latter on account of his defects of character. Naturally, therefore, Bronzino, when required to paint for Cosimo I.[1] a portrait of the long dead-and-gone Pietro, had no inducement to depict him in any other manner than a most unflattering one; and so drew a picture of a brainless and incapable youth, about as different from Botticelli's picture of him as anything could be.

Botticelli, in painting *his* portrait of Pietro, did not require (like Bronzino) to place Pietro's name upon it. To every Florentine of that age the feature of the medallion (quite meaningless as regards any one else, but full of meaning as regards Pietro) told with unerring certainty whom the picture represented.[2]

Happily, in this instance technical criticism is not at variance with historical fact; the late M. Eugène Müntz, Director of the École des Beaux Arts, Paris, than whom there is no higher authority, having given it as his opinion that this picture belongs to the later period of Botticelli's art, and is the portrait of Pietro, the eldest son of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

[1] Vol. ii. chap. xxiv. p. 260.

[2] An additional proof lies in the fact that the portrait of Pietro at the age of seventeen, painted in miniature in the copy of Homer presented to Pietro at his marriage in 1488 (chap. ix. p. 267), distinctly shows the same face as that in Botticelli's portrait, with only the natural difference between a youth of seventeen and a man of twenty-five.

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